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The Week

PRESIDENT COOLIDGE has thrown the World Court overboard. That is the only reasonable interpretation of his Kansas City speech. He observes that the nations now members of the Court seem "unwilling to concur" in the Senate's reservations, a statement which is rather less than a half truth, and adds that he does not intend "to ask the Senate to modify its position . . . Unless the requirements of the Senate are met by the other interested nations I can see no prospect of the country adhering to the Court." In other words, the President has decided that even such half-hearted support as he has been giving to the project is a political liability, and characteristically he abandons it. It is possible that the election results, revealing unexpected weakness of the administration in Massachusetts, New York and other states, were responsible for this decision; but it is equally probable that some time ago he was frightened by the irreconcilables like Senator Borah, of whom he is notoriously afraid, and decided to surrender.

WE hardly need at this time to recite to our readers the facts about the World Court situation. While it is true that the Geneva Conference did not accept the Senate's reservations in toto, they went as far as they possibly could in that direction without gravely imperiling both the League and the Court. Broadly speaking, they accepted all the reservations but added an interpretation of their own to the fifth. The Senate had said that no advisory opinion should be asked of the Court, without our consent, as to any matter in which the United States has or claims an interest. As to matters in which the United States is one of the disputants, this statement was of course unnecessary. The Court's own ruling in the Eastern Carelia affair established the principle that no advisory opinion will be given without the consent of both parties. But as to other matters, what the Senate demands is a universal veto power over all advisory opinions, whether we are in fact concerned or not. The Court members are willing to give us complete equality with every other nation. If one vote in the Council can prevent the request for an advisory opinion (a question of procedure not yet settled) we may do the same with our one vote. But the conferees cannot admit the right of the United States to prevent an action which the whole League wishes, in a matter where we are not one of the disputants. Since we are not in the League and need not take part in the discussions, the terms we are offered would in fact amount to much more than equality. But the powers will not and cannot let our "no" outweigh the whole League's "yes."

THIS attitude, we submit, is not unreasonable. It was repeatedly said during the Senate debate and subsequently by President Coolidge and others that we are seeking only equality. The conferees have merely assumed that we mean what we say. Certainly their reply left plenty of room for further discussion, possible compromise, for the finding of a formula to satisfy the Senate's unfair, unnecessary demand for special safeguards. But all doors are now slammed shut by President Coolidge. He will not again lift a finger to bring about American participation in the most important effort the world has ever seen to substitute legal machinery for brute force, law for war. And he has the effrontery to announce his intentions at the dedication of a Lib-

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erty Memorial for World War Heroes; and to assert that he is keeping faith with our noble dead. There is, we submit, but one sense in which that is true. The President is by his attitude making additional wars more likely. He is, constructively, seeing to it that more soldiers shall be killed in battles yet to come to join the men already needlessly sacrificed. Then there will be more noble dead, and more Hero Memorials to be dedicated.

AFTER long hesitation the Canadian government has finally appointed Mr. Vincent Massey, an able and disinterested man, its representative in Washington. There is every reason for American opinion to welcome the appointment as a step in the direction of a better understanding between the two governments. They can communicate with each other more freely, more confidentially and more successfully by representatives of their own choosing than they can through the mediation of the British Embassy. The assertion by Canada of the right of self-representation indicates that she feels less dependent on the protection of Great Britain than formerly and, consequently, less suspicious of possible designs on her independence by the United States. This is as it should be. A working understanding between the two American governments should become the major object of the foreign policy of both of them. The value of such an understanding is not sufficiently appreciated in this country because there have been of late years few causes of difference between the two governments and because Americans in their conceit tend to take the Canadians too much for granted. But it will be more appreciated in the future. For the success of the pan-American policy of the United States will depend on it, and to a smaller extent the future excellence of the relations between the United States and Great Britain. It is very much to be hoped that Australia, New Zealand and British South Africa will also soon appoint ministers to represent them in Washington.

TWO gentlemen have been holding a conference at Odessa and have set the telegraph wires buzzing in consequence. They are George Chicherin and Tewfik Rushdi Bey, the foreign ministers of Russia and Turkey, respectively. At once the lively journalists of Western Europe have invented an explanation of their meeting. A Pan-Asiatic League is to be formed. Russia, Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan, India, China and Japan are to unite in opposition to Europe. The successes of the Cantonese forces in China make the present a propitious moment. All this has a familiar sound; we have heard it many times before under various guises. There are two things to be said about it. In the first place a Pan-Asiatic League is improbable. Russia under Stalin is seeking a rapprochement with Western Europe rather than a policy of defiance. Turkey also is seeking to identify itself with the Occident. Russia and Japan are at loggerheads over Manchuria. Other difficulties equally serious might be mentioned.

IN the second place, if Asia really wanted to form a League of Nations, why not? If the Geneva organization is good for Europe, and the Pan-American Union for the Western Hemisphere, why should not the Asiatic powers get together in the same way? If it be urged that such a grouping would be aimed at the white man, the answer is threefold: first, the dominance of the white man in the East, in so far as it rests upon force, is doomed in any case; second, the nations could hardly do more to oppose Europe in combination than they are now doing separately, since not one of them could supply troops or money in important quantities to aid another; and third, an Asiatic League would be a much more responsible and reasonable body with which Europe could negotiate than the individual powers of which it would be composed.

THE Pennsylvania Republican machine was not frightened into respectability, even temporarily, by the revelation that more than half a million dollars had been squandered to win the Senatorial nomination for William S. Vare. Its methods in the election were plainly as bad as or worse than those of the primary. Outside Philadelphia, W. B. Wilson, the Democratic candidate, led Vare by 50,000 votes. The latter's victory was therefore machine made, in that city. How was it made? In forty-four election districts, no votes for Wilson were counted. In thirty-two others, he received one vote per district. In seventy-six districts, Vare was solemnly recorded as receiving 16,709 votes and Wilson 32! We agree with United States Senator George W. Norris when he says:

> Does any sane, patriotic citizen of the United States think for a moment that these figures are the actual results of a fair and honest election? It is apparent on the face of the record that no honest election was held; or if an honest election was held, that the honest results have been withheld.

The importance of this fact goes beyond the question of unseating Vare. If he is rejected by the Senate, Fisher, the newly-elected Governor of Pennsylvania, will merely appoint a Senator who to all intents and purposes will be Vare's twin brother. If it can be shown that Wilson was really elected, the matter will of course be out of Governor Fisher's hands. The Senate is planning, it is said, to make an investigation of the Pennsylvania election. We hope it will be a thorough one.

ANYONE who believes that prosperity and enlightened employers are doing so much to alleviate the workers' situation that nothing else is necessary ought to check up on the opposition to the passage of a law in the great and enlightened state of New

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York limiting the working hours of women to forty-eight a week. That production can be and usually is at least as large on the eight-hour day as on a longer one is now a commonplace of informed managerial theory. That industrial workers, especially women, ought not to be required to work longer, is a commonplace among students of industrial hygiene. Yet the associated manufacturers of the state are fighting the proposed law with might and main. In this effort they are abetted by the doctrinaire feminists of the Women's party, who profess to believe that a law limiting the hours of women but not of men puts women at an economic disadvantage in seeking employment. There is no reliable evidence to prove that this is so, and there is precious little justification for the assumption in economic theory. A law covering men and women as well would doubtless be more desirable but since that would be unconstitutional, a law covering women alone is very much better than nothing.

THE surplus in the Federal Treasury for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1927, may be $250,000,000, it may as Secretary Mellon now intimates be $300,000,000, or it may be even larger. There is Mr. Coolidge's inept proposal to rebate this as yet uncertain and non-existent surplus to the income taxpayers in December of this year. There is Mr. Mellon's emendation to apply the rebate to next year's taxes. Either one of these plans is better than any plan to reduce tax rates in future years. Under the latter head falls not only the original Democratic scheme for a general tax reduction, but the scheme now advanced by the National Association of Manufacturers, the United States Chamber of Commerce and others to reduce the corporation levy. This latter plan seems just now to be in the ascendancy; yet it appears to us the worst of all. No legislation should be passed involving a permanent diminution of tax revenue, in view both of the uncertainty of the future and the desirability of paying off the national debt as rapidly as possible. But if any such legislation is passed, it should apply to those least able to pay. A corporation levy of 13½ percent on net income is not difficult to pay and does not hamper the business of the community. If the corporation tax needs revision, as we believe it does, the revision should be for the purpose of drawing not less but more revenue from corporation profits. There is some danger of a flat corporation tax, even on net income, being passed on to the consumer, and there is a certainty that the comparatively low rate enables many individuals to escape income taxes by incorporating. A form of graduated corporation tax which will fit better into the general income tax picture is the reform to be aimed at.

DR. JESSIE WALLACE HUGHAN, a teacher of English in New York high schools, for six years was near the top of the eligible list for head of department. She has actually been carrying on the duties of that position. But she has never been officially appointed to it, or received the salary due to the grade. Her name has been passed over again and again for others lower on the list. Dr. Abraham Lefkowitz, a high school teacher of history, was placed by the Board of Examiners at the head of the list of those eligible for head of department. His appointment as such was requested by the principal of a high school, but the appointment was opposed by the Board of Superintendents. Ruth Gillette Hardy was on the list of those eligible for principal of elementary school. She was passed over when her turn was reached. Why? Doctor Hughan is a member of the Socialist party, and was opposed to our entrance into the War. Doctor Lefkowitz is a member of the Farmer-Labor party. Miss Hardy is vaguely charged with being "radical." All three are members of the Teachers' Union. Unsubstantial and ridiculous charges of "disloyalty" have been made against them. If this were merely a matter of persecution by patriotic zealots on account of political views it would be bad enough. But apparently it is also the result of dirty politics, through the intrusion of a politically controlled Board of Superintendents into what should be an academic and professional system of appointments. The Union and Doctor Lefkowitz in particular have opposed a spoils bill fostered by Associate Superintendent Edward Mandel, which would have destroyed the authority of the Board of Examiners and let in Mandel's friends. They opposed the election of Mr. Mandel to the Board of Superintendents, and of other Tammany satellites whom they considered unfit. Apparently Tammany is up to its old tricks.

TO many who have followed the checkered course of the French budget and have come to doubt the feasibility of balancing it, the rise of the foreign exchange value of the franc which has continued with few interruptions for so many weeks may be puzzling. It is apparently to be accounted for by French confidence in the Poincaré régime, which has reversed the flight of French capital from the country. As capital fled, it depressed the franc; as it returns, the franc naturally rises. The question is, how long this can continue? Obviously the influence will cease to be felt as the end of the return flow arrives. What will happen then depends largely on the state of the public treasury. One important factor tending to reduce government receipts results from the very rise of the franc. When foreign exchange rates fall, exports and consequently business volume are stimulated, but when they rise or remain stationary, this stimulation is removed. Then tax receipts tend to diminish, especially if the internal price level does not continue to rise. Numerous French industries already are reporting depression. Obviously the critical moment for stabilization is at hand when the end of

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the return flow of capital is in sight. This may be what prompted the visit of the Chancellor of the British Exchequer, Mr. Reginald McKenna, to Poincaré with proposals from American and British bankers. Unless Poincaré can manage soon to balance his budget and keep it balanced, and to check any reaction in the exchange, stabilization will become more difficult than ever.

Inertia As a Patriotic Ideal

ONCE again the American government has labored, this time somewhat feebly, to break away from the routine of its own customary policy and has failed—egregiously and ignobly failed. Two Republican Presidents in succession proposed adherence to the World Court of the League of Nations; and the Department of State negotiated a treaty which carried out their purpose. The Senate after prolonged hesitation finally consented to ratify the protocol with reservations. The League agreed to all the reservations except one, and it is willing to discuss the single exception. But President Coolidge will not admit that there is anything to discuss. Unless the nations which adhere to the Court consent to the American reservations just as they are, the incident, according to Mr. Coolidge, will be regarded as closed. This precipitate retreat is pathetic in its weakness. Responsibility for any positive political project distresses and disconcerts him. In a moment of aberration he took over from his predecessor a new policy. But in fighting for its achievement he felt like a fish out of water. He must seize the first excuse to flop back into his own congenial juice. He could not keep company with the uneasy ghost of his one political innovation. "Thank the God of my fathers," we can hear him exclaim, "I am well out of that. Never again will I risk a loss by advocating a departure from the traditional policy of the American government for which I cannot allege a good business excuse."

Responsible as Mr. Coolidge superficially is for this poor-spirited retreat, he is really the victim rather than the master of the occasion. American politics in almost all its expressions is suffering from a fatal futility. The defeat of the proposed American adherence to the World Court is merely one more illustration of its enfeebled energy and purpose. Throughout many years every public-spirited patriotic effort of the American people to march onward has failed, just as Mr. Coolidge has failed, egregiously and ignobly. There must be a reason.

The reason is the marriage which has been consummated in public opinion between patriotism and inertia. Only fifteen years ago the aggressive and prospectively the victorious element in American public opinion was an impulse to eradicate the notorious abuses of our political and business life by a program of positive political and economic reorganization. It seemed for the moment as if the better part of the nation were coming to believe that a consciously progressive collective policy was essential to American national fulfillment. The election of Mr. Wilson to the Presidency in 1912 checked this impulse by selecting as its political agent the Democratic party which was not progressive by impulse or conviction, but Mr. Wilson himself was a partial progressive and under the stimulus of responsibility his progressivism increased, and progressive ideas obtained an eloquent and conspicuous advocate. Then the World War suddenly occupied the political stage and interrupted the ordinary course of American domestic development. For a while, indeed, it seemed to strengthen the progressive impulse. In 1917 on the occasion of American intervention, it looked as if the American nation had broken finally with its traditions and had crowned a series of innovations in its domestic policy by a practically revolutionary innovation in its foreign policy. For the assumption of a positive responsibility for European peace implied or seemed to imply a renunciation of the historical American satisfaction with its own self-contained manifest destiny.

Then the reaction began. As soon as the fighting ended, the frenzied passion of the ordinary American for crusading in Europe vanished as quickly as it appeared. A violent revulsion of attitude took place which revived the old American isolationism in a peculiarly virulent and irreconcilable form. This utter retreat was demoralizing. It involved the downfall also of the domestic progressive agitation. Yet at about the time of the European crusade and as a result partly of the same state of mind, the American government with apparently almost unanimous popular consent undertook the courageous and radical experiment of waging war on the evils of alcoholism by outlawing in all the United States the production and the sale of alcoholic beverages. But here again apparent unanimity was illusory. The opponents of prohibition proved to be far more valiant and effective in violating the law than they were in putting up a fight against its adoption. The American nation has slowly and in a way devoid of public spirit subtracted from national prohibition the confirmation of sufficient popular approval. The great experiment has degenerated into a feeble prohibition dictatorship tempered by assassination in the form of bootlegging.

There is only one sufficient explanation for these repeated and usually inglorious retreats from exposed progressive positions. As a result of its abortive journeys of the last ten years, national opinion is confused as to the name and location of the port for which the ship of state is ordered. It has for the time being lost its way. From the election of Jefferson to the end of the nineteenth century the American nation, except for the decade before the Civil War, knew where it was going. Its

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political and economic institutions seemed to the average American to guarantee by their carefully safeguarded virtue the democratic ideal of a steadily improving quality of individual and social life. He was also fully convinced that scrupulous avoidance of European entanglements was essential to a continuation of this successful newer-worldliness. There followed twenty years during which public opinion was wracked by doubts whether the old institutions and policies which originated in a democracy of pioneer landowners would meet the needs of a modern urban industrialized society. For a while the American nation acted as if it needed a new policy and in certain respects new institutions in order to vindicate under the changed conditions its old ideal of steadily improving standards of popular life. It was during this period that the experiments in progressive policy and legislation were begun. How they would have fared if they had not been interfered with we shall never know. They were doubtless dubious and half-baked in many respects, but they were being tried for good reasons and they pointed in a constructive direction. Progressives expected that as the result of increasing experience they would develop an improved technique. They were never allowed the opportunity. The reaction which the War brought in its wake finished the experiment. The resulting cynicism, disillusionment and distraction offered to the conservatives an opportunity to revive the former self-satisfaction of the American nation with its fund of political and economic traditions and practices.

The spokesmen of all vested American interests took advantage of the discouragement to preach that the old way was the best and the only way. Headed by Mr. Coolidge, they insisted that the traditional policies and institutions of American government and society are as capable as they were during the pioneer period of fulfilling the primitive promise of the American Republic and that the chief object of public policy is the promotion of private business. For the moment the American people listen to them and will not listen to their adversaries. They have created an atmosphere in which progressive ideas and policies wither away. Many political and economic innovations are proposed and obtain perhaps a brief popularity or publicity; but there is no sufficient will and ability to focus popular interest on their accomplishment. The patriotic apologists have deprived American political and civil life of any ardor for self-improvement or any curiosity about ways of achieving reforms.

It may not be wholly an evil and a loss for the American people to feel for a while politically disillusioned and sceptical. They have until recently attributed too much of their well-being to political precautions and policies so that whenever they saw an evil clearly, such as the curse of alcoholism, they instinctively appealed to the state. In this respect the progressives were even more orthodox than the stand-patters. If the present scepticism cultivated the practice of scrutinizing more thoroughly and methodically than in the past all political processes and projects, it would be wholly beneficial. But the existing scepticism is confined by prescription to the proposals of progressive politics. The stand-patters, although they have no faith in the virtue of politics as the agent of progressivism, are willing to wager the future of social order on the virtue of politics as the agent of inertia. It is a stupid and fatal mistake on their part. A rule which works only one way is suspect. A political system which is powerless to accomplish innovations will, in the long run, be powerless to protect social order. Its propagandists will have dried up the source of disinterested public spirit. The needed innovations will accumulate behind a legal dam, which in the long run will not be high enough or strong enough to prevent them from overriding the obstacle. Yet if the obstacle is brushed aside without previous preparation and if convulsions and disorder are the price which have to be paid for needed innovations, future Americans will look back and deplore the day when progressive policies and legislation in America were disqualified from the consideration of true patriots.

Obviously American politics will not remain for long the victim of scepticism and inertia. There are changes impending in location of economic power and in its distribution among regions and classes which will cause severe political strains and demand some kind of political relief. But while such changes are inevitable and desirable, they may come in one of two ways. They may come as the fulfillment of a precious and an essential American national idea or they may come as the violation of a prevailing national sense of right. If they come by the former route, the process of readjustment will be orderly. If they come by the latter route, it will be disorderly. But it cannot come by the former route, if the vested interests succeed permanently in convincing American public opinion that opposition to innovation is the major obligation which a good citizen owes to his country. For in that case the American nation will be unable to undertake those changes in economic and political organization which are demanded by the realities of its own life without being false to what it has been encouraged to conceive as its national ideal. American conservatives are committing a grave mistake in confusing conservatism with inertia. They have been so successful in propagating this confusion that they have erected a barrier against those minor innovations which they themselves occasionally wish to accomplish. They cannot themselves legislate for any but negative or customary purposes. Their success, if it continues, will turn out to be their own undoing. For a democracy in which inertia has become a patriotic duty will by its political ineptitude compromise the very existence of institutions which the conservatives consider it most essential to preserve.

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What the Communists Did to the Garment Workers

ONE of the bitterest fights in the history of the cloak and suit industry of New York City has just ended. The terms of the settlement between the union and the inside manufacturers, no matter how interpreted, are not favorable to the union. A fight begun nineteen weeks ago for the purpose mainly of fixing greater industrial responsibility on the jobbers has been concluded without the achievement of that end. The jobbers in fact have not yet settled at all; nor is it likely that when they do the union will gain much.

On paper, the Ladies' Garment Workers have won two important concessions. Their work-week is reduced first to forty-two and after July, 1928, to forty hours, and their minimum wage scales are increased by amounts varying from $4 to $9 a week. Aside from any question as to the practical significance of these items, the fact remains that in measures designed to restore union control over working conditions in the industry, the present three-year agreement leaves it weaker than it was before the strike. By conceding to the manufacturers the right, under very broad conditions, to annual reorganization of their shops, the union is surrendering a measure of control over discharge that will sooner or later involve both it and the manufacturers in unforeseen difficulties.

The considerations that on July 1 prompted the union to reject the proposals of the Governor's Commission and to embark on this long strike appear, in these five months of conflict, to have lost their spell. At the outset the union's target was irresponsible ownership and management. Union attack was directed against those factors in the industry, like the jobbers, which had succeeded by their relations with the sub-manufacturers in undermining all standards of wages and employment. As the union has constantly reiterated, the rise of the jobber system has weakened the hold of the inside shop; it has led to an increase in the number of outside shops out of all proportion to the needs of the industry; annual employment has fallen in outside shops to twenty-six weeks a year; and no standards, not even wages, have been safe from the menace of this type of uncontrolled competition. This condition the union set out to solve by demanding that the jobbers assume financial responsibility for a guaranteed period of employment to workers in sub-manufacturers' shops and that they submit to a drastic limitation in the number of sub-manufacturers available for their use. The first demand the union has practically withdrawn and the second, conceded in principle by the inside manufacturers, is no nearer effective application now than it was before the strike was called.

As is unfortunately too often the case, the union was sound in the description of the ills of the industry but unsound in its cure. The cloak and suit industry of New York City is indeed still suffering from certain excesses perpetrated by both the manufacturers and the union even before 1920. What the legitimate elements in the industry require is tender nourishment and not additional rules. Wise administration of accepted principles and laws will solve countless problems where new rules, such as guaranteed periods of employment, assuming that they are at all capable of enforcement, will only create new burdens and irritations. In any case new rules that are burdensome and costly are never borne by the enemies of the union, but nearly always by its friends. The union needed to improve its machinery of administration; to study the problems of the inside manufacturer and to help solve them; to assume a greater measure of responsibility for discipline in the shop and for production. Such actual participation in the conduct of the industry would have been much more effective than proposals like that for guaranteed employment and would, in all probability, have led the manufacturers to relinquish or modify their demand for the right of annual reorganization. The cloak makers and their union would now be much better off had they accepted the recommendations of the Governor's Commission in June and utilized the existing administrative machinery to effect a gradual adjustment of their problems.

The pity of it is that these considerations were appreciated by the responsible leaders of the organization, and perhaps even by a large part of the rank and file. The strike is now commonly conceded to have been unwise if not unnecessary. It was the culmination of the tactics employed by the Trade Union Educational League or the Workers' party in winning control of the administration of the International Ladies' Garment Workers. The beginning, conduct and settlement of this strike represent the climax in the application of the principle of "boring from within" to the management of American trade unions. Mr. William Z. Foster and his coterie of trade union philosophers seized upon the union of women's clothing workers as an experimental station for testing their pet dogmas. Rarely has an experiment had such a disastrous and tragic outcome. By every accepted standard of leadership, the members of this group merit the distrust with which they are regarded by the American Federation of Labor. In spite of their professions of asceticism in union affairs, the management of the strike was notorious for its extravagance. The reckless disregard by these leaders of the industrial interests of the members of the union would be hard to match. Throughout this long struggle they resorted to demagogic appeal and to verbal distortions which had no other effect than to prolong a conflict they could have settled earlier on as good or better terms. In the furtherance of their own narrow and unimportant political aims, they did all in their power to alienate other labor

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groups whose support was essential to the cloak makers.

The settlement of the strike is a tribute to the courage of the thousands of cloak makers who since 1910 have come to appreciate the value of their organization and have learned to fight for its existence. Their last experience may have taught them to distinguish between political and industrial issues, and to appraise intelligently the qualities of successful and honest leadership.

Where the Boom Came From

IN current comments on the present wave of prosperity in the United States we read a good deal about the immense volume of savings, of new investments, of great bank deposits. It is generally assumed that we are accumulating capital at a tremendous rate, and it is generally assumed, too, that the faster capital can be accumulated, the better it will be for everyone. Does not saving create new productive facilities, thus involving both the payment of wages with which to buy new goods, and the production of the new goods to be bought?

We are indebted to Dr. B. M. Anderson, Jr., of the Chase National Bank, for an analysis of the situation which ought to give us pause. He first notes that the deposits of all state and national banks and trust companies expanded more between June 30, 1922, and June 30, 1926, than between April 6, 1917, and December 31, 1918—the period of our participation in the War. Very well, does not that mean that individuals and business have more money to deposit? The question is, however, how they got the money. Deposits, as is well recognized, arise largely from bank loans. And it is therefore not surprising to discover that loans, discounts and investments of these same banks increased to much the same extent.

This growth of credit may seem natural, too, to anyone thinking of the recent expansion of business activity. But Doctor Anderson points out that although there is about $13,000,000,000 more of deposit credit afloat today in this country than in 1919—an increase of roughly one-third—business actually needs less credit than in 1919 for its ordinary processes. We can tell that it ought to need less by measuring business activity and the prices at which it is being carried on. By combining an index of production (in physical units) with an index of transportation, we can see that in 1926 the physical volume of activity was about 25 percent greater than in 1919. If it were being carried on at the same price level, it would presumably need about 25 percent more bank credit than in 1919 to keep it going. But in this period prices have fallen more than 25 percent. Admittedly the measure is rough, yet however inaccurate it may be, it leaves a big gap to be accounted for in the use of credit. This gap is all the more striking when we remember that as a matter of fact, with hand-to-mouth buying, efficient transportation and reduced inventories, most businesses can get along with a smaller ratio of credit to the total dollar volume of their transactions than during the inflationary period.

The figures of the reporting member banks of the Federal Reserve System, which account for about 47 percent of the bank deposits of the country, indicate that the growth in credit is accounted for almost entirely by bank loans on, and investments in securities rather than by ordinary commercial loans, which are smaller than at the beginning of 1921. There has been a growth of upwards of $2,000,000,000 in loans secured by real estate mortgages, deeds of trust or other real estate liens, among all the member banks of the Federal Reserve System, which account for 74 percent of the nation's deposits. This total would undoubtedly be considerably larger if all the country banks could be included. There have also been large bank loans and investments based on real-estate bonds, notes and stocks. The banks, therefore, have been financing a big part of the building boom. In a similar way they have been financing the stock market boom by loans on stock-market collateral. Another large part of the credit has been applied against investments in foreign securities—which have sustained our export trade.

Even the "commercial" loans not included in the bank investments or loans on securities reflect new uses of credit which have stimulated trade. Whereas these loans are less than in 1921, they have grown by about $900,000,000 since 1922, although one would have expected them to be smaller. This is due largely to carrying the paper of corporations which finance instalment buying.

The conclusion is inescapable that the increasing rate of business activity in the past four years is largely due to expansion of bank credit. Securities of many sorts have been issued at a faster rate than they could have been issued if their sale had had to depend on the money savings of the community—i. e., the increase in time deposits and life insurance, and the purchase of stocks, bonds and mortgages for cash by individuals and corporations. And a large part of the consumers' goods marketed have been sold, not for cash but by means of expanded bank credit.

It is not necessary to go into the technical reasons which have made this credit expansion possible—the large supply of gold in this country and the open-market purchase policy of the Federal Reserve Banks—to see that the reserves on which it is founded are probably not capable of indefinite enlargement. Purely on the basis of the way credit arises in the banking system, there must come a time when the expansion will at least slow down, even if contraction does not become necessary. This has a bearing on the continuance of prosperity.

Of more permanent interest is the meaning of this phenomenon with regard to capital accumulation. Let us think of capital not as dollars but as

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physical things. Let us think of it as the quasi-permanent things which are not consumed in daily life, but rather are used in production and distribution of goods, such as factories, machinery, railroads, buildings. What leads to the increase of such things? A number of sources are ordinarily identified. When an individual consumer uses some of his dollars to deposit in a savings account or to buy life insurance or bonds or mortgages, he is buying less consumable goods than he might otherwise buy, and adding to the funds that may be expended to create capital goods. When a corporation distributes less in dividends than it might and uses the money instead to increase its plant or its surplus account, which is largely invested in securities, it is likewise by the use of its purchasing power diverting some of the productive forces of the community to the creation of capital. The government does the same thing when it raises money by taxation to spend for new roads, schools, canals or administrative buildings. Individual farmers add to capital when they improve their farms by their own labor instead of using that labor to raise consumable crops. All these sources of savings are commonly identified. It is not usual to include bank credit as a source of capital. But what happens when banks lend money on new capital issues, or buy them? Nobody, to be sure, has "saved" all the money they can so employ. Nevertheless exactly the same physical result is produced. The buildings are built, the railroads are extended, the materials are bought and the wages paid in order to add to physical capital. Part of the country's productive resources are diverted to the creation of real capital, just as if the money had come from any of the other sources. In a physical sense, the capital has been truly saved out of the country's stock of materials and energy.

Now it is ordinarily assumed that when capital is being created at a rapid rate, all must be well. Economists are loth to admit that capital equipment can be expanded too rapidly in relation to the buying power for the consumers' goods which the capital equipment can produce. In the very act of creating the new capital, they contend, adequate additions to consumers' purchasing power are made through the employment of the labor necessary to create it. But if this is the case, why should we worry over the expansion of real capital from bank credit any more than over its expansion from any other source? Why would it not be advisable so to change the nature of our banking system that it could keep on indefinitely enlarging credit for capital purposes?

If the ordinary economic assumption about capital formation were correct, such loans ought to be perfectly safe. They would, let us say, finance the erection of an indefinite amount of new building. But at the same time they would cause the owners and erectors of the buildings to pay in wages, directly or indirectly, enough so that the buying community would return with sufficient new demand to enable the owners to rent the buildings profitably and so pay back their borrowings.

There may be questions, of course, about the productive character of the loans. Loans to finance stock speculation do not ultimately increase physical production. Nor do loans for a canal that will not be used because it is not an economical means of transportation. But with proper safeguards, such loans might be avoided. If they were, would not a policy of unlimited capital expansion through bank credit be feasible?

We believe it would not, and we believe a rigorous investigation of why it would not would alter the prevailing economic theory about capital formation from whatever source. Regardless of the amount of credit and money in existence, and regardless of the distribution of purchasing power, the community at a given time has only a certain potential volume of productive power. It is conceivable that all this power might be used to create consumers' goods, in which case no additional productive resources would arise. Economists have been quick to see that this would put an end to the growth of wealth and consequently of material well-being. But suppose all were used to create new productive facilities, and none to produce consumers' goods. In that case we should have plenty of railroads and buildings, but no bread or clothing. This condition would be equally undesirable. And it would be impossible to maintain. Somewhere between these two extremes there must be a ratio between the use of productive power to create capital goods and its use to create consumers' goods which will at once be possible to maintain steadily and will lead to the greatest possible welfare of the community. To suppose that this ratio is automatically arrived at in the operation of the existing economic complex is the kind of assumption that has again and again been proved unwarranted in the criticism of classical theory. May we not develop a knowledge and a technique which will enable us to bring new benefits to the life of the community through informed control of capital investment?

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The Confessions of a Politician

I AM a country politician, midwestern, fairly successful. For ten years I was accounted a boss in my state and accordingly reviled. In cartoons and on the stage a quarter of a century ago, I would figure as the up-state district leader, a pudgy, fussy little man with a paint brush chin whisker and a lip for applejack. I never tasted applejack and my chin is smooth, but my kind is supposed to be silent, crafty, indefatigable and relentless; to eat thick beefsteaks, fried potatoes and pancakes for breakfast and die at sixty-three. I am a type that does not hold office, finding my lust for power quenched more pleasantly by intimacy with those who do hold office. I was charged with being head of a machine at one time. I operated under the old convention system fairly successfully, though it was a bad job and took a lot of time and required much unpleasant work. When the primary came, I helped it to come because I thought it would make my job easier, and I did find the primary was as easy to control as the convention, but with this difference: you could control the convention quietly, decently and in order; few people knew about it. When you control the primary, either corruptly or decently, it requires a brass band and a torchlight parade.

I happen to live and function in a state which has no tradition of spending money in politics. In the old convention days, the railroad attorneys controlled politics largely by issuing passes to delegates and by giving passes to members of the legislature. A small fund was collected every year by the railroad attorneys from the leading industries of the state. The fund never was over twenty-five thousand, sometimes much less. During the legislature and in political years this money was spent somewhat for liquor, somewhat for food, largely for cigars and in extreme unction, but not for thirty years, for ladies of questionable virtues. The ladies faded out of the picture in the legislature following the first McKinley campaign. Whiskey began to be surreptitious ten years later. But it was possible until the primary came for a country statesman coming to the capital to levy the tribute of a broiled half chicken garnished with mushrooms or a rare duck breast at the political club if he had control over one faction in his county and desired to make terms with the capital hierarchy. But when legislatures were in session food and drink and, as I say, in the old days, the ladies, were agencies which helped to govern a sovereign people.

Came the dawn and the primary. There another technique was required. For with the primary passes were abolished and then a year or two after the primary the high potency railroad attorney of the capital lost his status and cunning. So finally his job atrophied under him and he was no more. But the decay of a state railroad machine took several years. The machine leaders were embalmed somewhat by the fact that the primary had not come universally in the United States; and railroads, operating under the old convention system in other states, felt that they could operate under the primary in our state by the liberal use of money. It did not work.

I remember in the first decade of the century conducting a primary campaign for United States Senator in behalf of a local statesman of some national renown. We had a tremendous lot of publicity most of which I mooched off friendly newspapers, members of our faction. If it had been paid for it would have cost much money, but by reason of the zeal of the editors this publicity cost nothing except for the distribution of plates and matrices and the physical things that go to spread slogans and information. We covered the state, less than two million people, winning the primary against the combined efforts of the railroads and the incumbent who was backed by the powers and the President.

It all cost less than $4,000, every penny of which was publicly accounted for. If the gentle reader is middle-aged or worse and remembers fairly well things that happened twenty years or a quarter of a century ago, he may recall that politics were red hot in Roosevelt's day. In the White House, Roosevelt lent small official encouragement to the Republican Congressional insurgents. But while he tied up closely to the Republican organization in Congress, the Colonel was forever tooting militant clarion notes on his official Presidential bazoo. These clarion notes set the populace to dancing and they danced beautifully out of the control of the machine which President Roosevelt was so publicly supporting. That man had a Machiavellian genius for mischievous intrigue which must have kept the angels tittering during his whole career!

Well, anyway, in that decade from 1904 to 1914 which marks the period of Roosevelt's ascendancy unquestioned and turbulent, it was easy to get public interest in politics, but generally speaking it was difficult to use money successfully.

It was in that decade that I was branded as a boss. I was instrumental in naming a succession of governors of my state and a United States Senator or two. I do not think I ever asked either of them for a major appointment and I am sure I never got it if I did. I was interested in causes and while I hung around the legislature very little, I recall

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I was there two sessions in ten years putting through the program laid down by the platform which I was accused of writing and which perhaps I did write in its actual phraseology. But the platform was written by public sentiment. It was public sentiment in a score of states. We were doing in our state what practically every northern state was doing and some of the southern states also were doing. At the legislature in those years one met the old machine, the visible representatives of the railroads, of the insurance companies, of the mine owners, of the oil barons, and of the great mills—of property incorporated to be exact. The machine at the legislature was the "relic of old dacincy." Chiefly it was an organ of opposition. It had lost its constructive force.

It controlled a faithful minority. Looking back over those years and meditating upon that minority some of whose members passed to their reward with the world growing black over their high visions, I have come to have much respect for that minority. It held to its faith. It stayed by its creed and causes. It was sincere and according to its lights, honest. It saw no harm in the use of money, passes and patronage to produce results in politics provided, of course, those results would check the influx of anarchy, socialism, communism, revolution and rebellion which the members of the minority felt were engulfing the land. They were the leaders of another order. One day in the legislature when we mowed the machine gunners down like chaff, with some high flown progressive measure like the initiative and the referendum, or prohibition, or woman suffrage, or the minimum wage for women, or the eight hour day, I forget what it was, they gathered together in one corner of the legislative chamber at the close of the fatal final ballot, a handful of first class fighting men. They were white-faced with rage. They were impotent as the new machine rolled over them; the machine made up from men chosen by the primary to do what was obviously the people's will.

I saw them there that day. They glared at me. Their glare was the part of the balm of Gilead which I would rather have had than high offices or great wealth. I remember grinning at them, not exultantly, but humorously, and I thought kindly. But they probably remember it as a mean and devilish smirk. With most of the men of that huddled minority going down to defeat I had been for years personal friends. Those who are living still are my personal friends. I have never lost a friend by advocating a cause. The men whom I have defeated have been defeated on issues. If I ever hit below the belt it was because I mislocated the belt. But in that triumphant hour, that little group of pallid, angry defenders of what was then a losing cause, snuggling together in the midst of the mob that howled as the tellers announced the vote, could not know that the longer view of politics made them heroes. They did not realize that their cause was a part of the great struggle of humanity and that they were as necessary for progress as we were who in that day were the bright peculiar champions of progress. Now, those of the conservatives who have survived have their day of triumph, have seen the customs and the courts take many teeth out of the laws we passed. They have seen public clamor grow dumb. They have seen the yawping mob disintegrate. They have seen public sentiment, once white hot for reform, grow cold and the ranks of reform disintegrate. In other words they have seen a cycle pass. If they were young twenty years ago they may see the cycle reform and repeat itself.

Thirty years, a generation of man, is a long time to have remained in politics. I am under sixty, yet I sat in my first convention in 1888, nearly forty years ago. I have seen tides of public emotion rise, accumulate, break in fury, recede and form again. It takes twenty years or so to bring a cause or movement for fundamental principle to its climax. It is during the first five or ten years of triumphant trial that cause or movement or principle, being successful, is in the greatest danger. For in those years it must function without the live steam of public support behind it. And that time of trial is as much a part of the cycle of that cause as its glorious growing days. Probably this truth is one that does not get to the average politician: that his cause is in greatest danger after it has achieved the statute book or the administrative order. If it cannot stand alone without agitation, the cause is not established. It may be reëstablished, but as Roosevelt found out in 1914 it is hard to lash a dead horse to a gallop.

The things that came to a climax in that Rooseveltian decade, or within a few years after, under what we might call the Wilson wave, were prohibition, woman suffrage, the income tax, the direct election of United States Senators, the initiative and referendum, the primary, the minimum wage for women, the eight hour day, working men's compensation laws, mother's pension acts, laws against corrupt practices in the elections, the Federal Reserve Bank, and the Seaman's act. I was for the lot. I have preached these measures from forums, written about them in the newspapers, helped to jam them through legislatures, watched them go through Congress—the whole lot. Almost the last to go through was prohibition which is still having a stormy time. It is odd to reflect that those measures which met the bitterest opposition at the time they were adopted seem to be the most firmly established. Prohibition, which had been a midwestern philosophy and had been growing for forty years, went over as a national policy so quickly, with such fanatic enthusiasm, that it left a large minority, perhaps even a majority—certainly a ma-

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jority in the eastern seaboard states—unconvinced because they did not really know what it meant. In the West we knew precious well from a generation of experience that prohibition meant taking the wine out of the rich man's cellar, that it meant giving up the cocktail before dinner, that it meant raiding fashionable clubs where liquor was privately held in lockers. The governor of our state threatened to raid the state's big political club a quarter of a century ago, a club of which he was himself a member, and that put the quietus upon respectable law breaking in our state.

But across the country from Massachusetts to California the initiative and referendum which were bitterly and viciously attacked, have not slipped. The Federal Reserve act which was debated for six years in Congress is stronger than it was the day it was adopted. The income tax came too easily and is slipping in popular esteem. Certainly it is slipping badly if it is regarded as its promoters regard it as a means of getting the rich to assume their proportionate share of the national burden.

The inheritance tax, which came suddenly, may be fading. One way or another through court decisions which of course are merely reflections of public opinion, the minimum wage for women is losing ground. It came into our statute books with too much emotional content and not enough logical conviction. It will come back or something like it, but it produced legislative majorities in the states because it was backed by conviction among women in the states and not backed by that large convinced majority of all the people. And I have learned this lesson: a convinced majority of all the people is required for a statute to become a national policy.

I suppose I am an incorrigible optimist. I look over the work of thirty years in politics and see many things which I stood for and which once were successful, now crumbling into desuetude. Well, so it is. Many things have been crumbled and those things that have fallen by the wayside have not fallen because the people are fickle, but because we who promulgated those losing causes were unwise, trusted too much in emotion, believed too greatly in legislative enactments, and too little in the power of custom to establish the changes which seemed so just and which were and are just, and which one way or another must come if man on this planet lives at peace with his neighbors.

At the end I have questionings about the permanence of democracy in its present form. I sometimes think, looking over government and the established organized forms of controlling people, that the man who invented the ballot was the devil's last emissary on earth. I am not sure. I sometimes have my doubts even of this cheerful theory; but it would seem that there should be other ways of attaining organized righteousness than through campaigns and elections. Does the majority at an election mean anything permanent? Upon it can one read public sentiment? If you say you can, I ask you to take any election and interpret it. The prophets of old, Daniel, Isaiah, Elijah, who read dreams, had a much easier time than the prophets have today who try to make sense out of the jargon that comes on the first page of a Wednesday morning paper after an election. The vast expense of it, the vast annoyance of it, the vast disillusion of it are tremendously expensive. And some shorter, easier, cheaper way will be found in another century or two to guide public servants in their rules of obedience to popular will and righteous aspiration.

In fact, even now government persists largely outside of its political forms. Our associations, leagues, trade councils, federations and what not control Congress and the legislature, dominate public sentiment and make Presidents climb the stick like jumping-jacks, quite outside of constitutional rules and formulas. Studying our Constitution may soon be a purely academic research into an archaic document. We have at the moment a government of a predatory plutocracy which is striving earnestly to be a benevolent despotism and to check its ravening instincts. But the checks come not from the Constitution, not even from politics, but from trade organizations, the social clubs, the Rotarians, the national Chamber of Commerce, the manufacturers' association, the pious preachments of the President on prosperity as a mystic magic gift of Heaven. All these, more than laws and political platforms, are manicuring the bloody nails of the tiger that lurks in the jungle of our hearts.

It has been an interesting spectacle, this generation that I have seen in American politics; the procession of Presidents that I have known since Cleveland's first term, the statesmen that have risen, waxed fat, waned, faded and disappeared, the customs that have changed, the spirit of progress that has moved like a fleeting cloud upon the face of the waters. And it has been a great game. Indeed if one has no money in his chips, but merely the joy of the contest for what at the moment seems a righteous cause, there is no game in life so well worth playing. But if one swaps one's fate for the poor clicking chips that cross and recross the board, there is no game so terrible, no fortune so fickle, no failure so empty as that which a politician must face when he backs away from the table with the dawn of a new day.

(This is the tenth in a series of anonymous confessions, in which men and women in various occupations and walks of life are giving their professional or spiritual autobiographies.)

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Party Movements in Great Britain

I

THE last few weeks have seen a definite shift in the perspective of English politics. The Conservative Conference at Scarborough, the Labor Conference at Margate, the resignation of Lord Oxford, these have served to give a far more precise outline to the nature of party controversy. It is becoming clear that the return to a two-party system is now final; and the dividing line between Labor and Conservatism is much more easy to understand in the light of recent events.

The Scarborough Conference meant the end of Baldwinism as a force in Conservative politics. The failure of the Prime Minister to settle the coal strike, the lack of any response to his general plea for industrial peace, have made him little more than a leader in name. Where it was his own tendency to see the general strike of last May as an evil, indeed, but an evil which made the problem of remedy, rather than the question of punishment, important, his followers are much more concerned to insist upon the latter. They are afraid of the progress made by labor ideas. They are convinced that the prosperity of America is quite largely due to the relative ineffectiveness of trade unions there. They therefore seek the means, on the one hand, to prevent a future Labor government from using its majority effectively, and, on the other, so strictly to control the internal life of trade unions as to make a policy of strikes difficult to the point of impossibility. Mr. Baldwin, in fact, is now in power only in name; effectively, the extremists are in the saddle and they are riding hard to their goal.

The Scarborough Conference was dominated by two matters only—the reform of the House of Lords and the control of the unions. The necessity of the former is common ground among all parties; but whereas both Labor and Liberals are agreed that no reform must put a second chamber in a position of authority—a growing party among Labor is against any second chamber—the one ambition of the Conservatives is to strengthen their position before Labor obtains a majority. Their ambition is to secure at least two principles. First, they want a strong representation of the peerage in the second chamber; and, second, they are anxious that the power over finance shall not remain the exclusive appanage of the House of Commons. The object of the first is simple. There are about a dozen Labor, and a hundred Liberal, peers in the Upper Chamber; the remaining six hundred are Conservative. If, therefore, a place is found for the peers in a reconstructed second chamber, it will simply reinforce the Conservative party there; and no other party would be willing to give the hereditary peerage a place. The object of the second is based on the realization that the road to socialism lies through the taxing power. If joint control over the power of the purse is established, Labor will not be able to attempt any drastic financial legislation. On these points the Conference was unanimous; and Mr. Baldwin was compelled to reaffirm his pledge that before he goes to the country he will introduce legislation to this end. Whether he will carry it through before a general election is more doubtful; but if he does, no one can doubt that the severest constitutional crisis this country has known since 1688 will arise as soon as Labor comes into office.

The hatred of the trade unions which the Conservatives feel was shown very strikingly in the debate on the Trade Disputes act. Every attack on the unions was cheered; every attempt, as by Sir Leslie Scott, a former solicitor-general, to explain the complications of the subject, and the necessity of proceeding cautiously, was heard with angry impatience. The delegates wanted a general strike to be declared definitely illegal. They insisted that no strikes should be anywhere permissible unless a general and secret ballot of the members has been taken; they wanted the prohibition of mass-picketing and of the practice of picketing blacklegs' houses; and they asked that no one should contribute to the political fund of a union unless he has expressly declared his desire to do so (the inverse of the present law). One of the wiser Tories present said to me that the atmosphere was like nothing so much as the feeling about trade unions a hundred years ago; "there was," he said, "black reaction tempered by indiscretion." So strong was the feeling that the chief Conservative organizer blessed the policy of the Conference; and in his address to the delegates Mr. Baldwin sheepishly promised that legislation on the subject should be introduced. The Conference held its annual commination service against Russia; it also insisted (according to rule) on the unexampled glories of the British empire.

No one, I think, can reflect either upon the temper or the resolutions of Scarborough without seeing that Mr. Baldwin's pacifism has completely failed. The Conservative party has become a party of property, basing itself mainly on industrial wealth and determined that the law and institutions of this country shall be exerted fully in the protection of the present system. The general strike does not awaken suspicions that something is amiss in that system; it merely confirms a horrid suspicion that Bolshevist agitators are responsible for it. Passionate loyalty to the trade unions evokes not reflection, but anger. Fears of a Labor government are so strong that the party is prepared to alter the whole incidence of legislative authority to

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prevent such a government from carrying out its policy. No one can say that the Conservatives will not win; but I venture to prophesy that if they do win, vast numbers in the ranks of Labor who are now constitutional will be driven over to the Communist party.

II

On Friday, October 15, Lord Oxford resigned the leadership of the Liberal party. So ends an honorable career of nearly fifty years, which has been dignified by a loyalty to friends and a devotion to duty unsurpassed in the history of our politics. Why did Lord Oxford resign? The answer, I think, can only be that his attempt, after the general strike, to drive Mr. Lloyd George from the ranks of Liberalism, even though supported by every Liberal leader of note, completely failed. First, Mr. George would not go; and, second, the more advanced Liberals, Mr. Keynes, Mr. Ramsay Muir and Mr. E. D. Simon, openly sympathized with Mr. George against their titular leader. For the moment, the leadership will remain in commission. Proposals to find a new leader like Lord Beauchamp or Lord Reading break down because a peer cannot today lead a party; and the suggestion of Sir Herbert Samuel, who has not participated in existing feuds, is impossible because he has no seat in the House, and there is no certainty whatever that he could get one. Mr. Lloyd George will accordingly continue as chairman of the Parliamentary Liberal party in which Sir John Simon, Mr. Runciman, Captain Wedgwood Benn, Sir Godfrey Collins, among others, refuse to recognize his authority; and the feud will remain unimpaired because Lord Oxford's supporters are convinced that Mr. Lloyd George's disloyalty is responsible for the former's resignation. Mr. Lloyd George himself retains his funds and a good deal of his dynamic power; but he is still distrusted on all sides, and no one believes easily either in his loyalty or his sincerity. On the issue on which Lord Oxford separated from him—the handling of the general strike—I believe that Mr. Lloyd George was right and Lord Oxford was wrong; but it explains the difficulty men feel in dealing with Mr. Lloyd George that the latter now insists—in the face of overwhelming evidence—that he and Lord Oxford hold identical views upon the general strike.

The Liberal party, in brief, is still rent in pieces by factions, and it shows no signs of recovering its strength in the country. It has no industrial policy; Mr. Lloyd George's agricultural policy has not been overacceptable to many of its members; and the main body of its followers are people like Sir Ernest Benn and Sir Hugh Bell who adhere, with great ability, to the most extreme conception of a laissez-faire state. The Liberal party is the ablest we have; but leaders are useless without an army. Its destiny appears to be that of a small group in the House of Commons seeking to modify the programs of either of the two great parties. There is no prospect of its ever again becoming a government.

III

Immediately following Scarborough, came the Labor party's Conference at Margate; and it is, I think, generally admitted to have been the best Labor Conference of recent years. The delegates were throughout keen and alert; they knew their own minds; and on one vital topic—that of birth-control—they refused to accept the dictation of the machine. The chairman, Mr. Robert Williams, made an address which, though not always phrased very happily, was notable as showing the transition of a one-time extremist to right-wing constitutionalism; "the communists," he concluded, "look to the next general strike; the Labor party looks to the next general election." The outstanding feature, indeed, of the Conference was its determined moderation. It rejected the effort of the Communists to secure admission to the party, by overwhelming majorities; it accepted a new land-policy of which the structure is built on compensation to existing owners; and it would have nothing to do with plans for "scenes" in the House of Commons, or an embargo on coal in aid of the miners. The left wing made itself notable by the virulence of its attack on the present leaders; but it lacked even the semblance of a constructive policy. That is, I think, unfortunate; for Mr. MacDonald and his friends have largely ceased to be interested in ideas and rely for policy not on a considered plan but upon the day-to-day events of the House of Commons. If the left wing would cease discussing high-sounding generalities and concentrate on a detailed, concrete and simple program, they would, I am convinced, drive the present leaders much further toward an effective socialist policy than they are now either prepared or compelled to go.

The main discussions of the Conference were on the miners' lockout and agriculture. On the first, the miners wanted a levy on the trade unions, and an embargo on the import of coal. Largely through Mr. Thomas and Mr. Tillett, these demands were defeated. The cost of the general strike, and the present financial embarrassment and unemployment, were held to render them impossible of achievement. The Conference, accordingly, confined itself to blaming the utter folly (to say the least) of Mr. Baldwin's present policy, and pledging the party to nationalize the mines immediately it comes into power. On the whole, the Conference had no alternative but to act as it did. Yet it would have been both wise and generous on its part to attempt some system of voluntary levy for the miners; and the parliamentary party would have done well to create a body like the old Anti-Corn Law League to devote itself, between now and the next general election, to preaching nationalization of the mines in and out of season. As it is, the miners are left to

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carry on their heroic fight with little substantial assistance. Partly, doubtless, they have created their own isolation; but it is also true that they had the right to expect a generosity greater than the caution of the Conference would permit.

The agricultural discussion reached a very high level. Broadly speaking, the party has committed itself to a policy of land nationalization by state purchase, subject to leasehold tenure under standards imposed by county committees on which Labor is to have half the representation. The purchase is to be carried out on the basis of the annual taxable value of the land; compensation being thus given, not as a matter of principle, but because it is more expedient to nationalize with good will than without it. In the spring, a vast campaign is to be undertaken in the rural areas to drive home the merits of the policy and so end the present domination of agriculture by the Tory party. There are several reasons why this venture may reasonably look for success. Land nationalization is now a policy which even non-party experts commend. The Tory party, moreover, has done practically nothing for agriculture since it came into office, and there is much disillusion about it among farmers and agricultural laborers. Coöperative marketing and state import of raw materials are now much more acceptable as the lessons of war-experience are more carefully analyzed.

The complete defeat of the Communists was expected. In some ways, it is regrettable, for they are among the most energetic of the Labor ranks; and their leader, Mr. Harry Pollitt, (who had just been released from prison) was among the ablest, and easily the most attractive of the figures of the Conference. Their errors are mainly two. They regard all differences from themselves as proof of moral obliquity and blackguard relentlessly men held in affectionate esteem by the whole party; and in obedience to the Third International, they press for policies which go far beyond either the will of Labor or the possibility of application. Lesser difficulties are their constant descent to the meanest intrigues and manœuvres, and their persistent effort after exactly that factionalism which they refuse to permit in their own party. On their side it must be said that their exclusion is at least partly due to the fears of men like Mr. MacDonald of what the non-labor electorate would say if the adherents of Moscow were admitted to the party. Their exclusion is, I think, a loss to the energy and hold of the party; but they themselves make it inevitable by their own unwillingness to be loyal and honorable in their dealings with the party as a whole.

Over the rest of the Conference I must pass rapidly. The women carried their demand that the Maternity Welfare Centres of the Ministry of Health should give medical advice on birth-control to those who ask for it; and they carried it partly because it was recognized that the women's view of this question was the first consideration, and partly because Mr. MacDonald's attempt to defeat them was so unique a mixture of puritanism and puerility. The Conference pledged itself to repeal any legislation (said to be under consideration by the Baldwin government) which prohibited the civil service associations from joining the Labor party. It repudiated the imperialistic policy of Sir Austen Chamberlain in China. It elected a very right-wing executive and defeated the Chairman's candidature as a punishment for his presidential attack on the general strike. Altogether, it was a Conference which showed that the rank and file of the party are full of energy and devotion, and that they still enthusiastically believe that socialism can be achieved at the polls.

IV

Are they right in this belief? If the by-elections indicate anything, they show that confidence in the Conservative government is rapidly waning. Even hostile observers admit that a general election would largely increase the representation of Labor, and if the government does attack the trade unions, there would, I believe, be a landslide toward it. On the other side, several things must be said. First, the leadership of the party is not very satisfactory. Mr. MacDonald is picturesque, vivid and eloquent, but his mind is episodic and timid, and he is well behind the majority of his followers. Though its publicity and organization are both admirable—Mr. Arthur Henderson is the best political organizer since Schnadhorst—its research work is lamentably deficient; the trade unions, particularly, have little conception of research and no real understanding of how to use the technical expert. The party in the country, by common admission, is superior to any of its rivals in energy and enthusiasm; but its members still tend to generate heat rather than light.

I expect it to go forward, and the events here chronicled suggest that it will go forward rapidly. But I do not feel certain that a majority is within its grasp. Its permeation of the middle class is much slower than seemed likely in 1919; a proof of which is the hesitancy of the legal profession to join the ranks. The danger ahead is the danger of coalition with the advanced liberals; Mr. Snowden certainly desires it, and though Mr. MacDonald was compelled to repudiate the notion at Margate, it is permissible to doubt whether he is unalterably unfriendly. Coalition, I am convinced, would split the party in pieces; and it would be the best of the party that would leave it. The dilemma is that without coalition, it may be a minority government; and I stand with those who believe that another minority government like the last would do infinite harm to Labor's record of sincerity. With a coalition, it might have a majority; but it would lose every earnest worker it possesses. A period of six or seven years of opposition, with a Tory party like the present in power, would do Labor enormous

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good. It would be consolidated, it would win far wider support, it would discover new leadership. But seven more years of a régime like the present would exacerbate the division between classes to a highly dangerous degree.

Those who judge modern England must remember that the real class party therein is the Conservative party. It has taken its stand on the rights of property, and it refuses to concede that mitigation of them without which there cannot be social peace. England, of course, is the classic land of unexpected compromise and it may well be that a new situation will shift the perspective to a more hopeful angle. At present the prospects are dubious and, though the ultimate victory of the progressive forces seems to me unquestionable, the way thereto lies through the valley of despair and disillusion.

HAROLD J. LASKI.

London.

Washington Notes

USUALLY I fight shy of political predictions whether they concern the action of Congress or the action of the voters. There is no surer or more effective way for a writing man to hit himself behind the ear. I have known all the shine to be rubbed off a high and handsome reputation built up through years of conscientious effort and buttressed with many good guesses, by a single unfortunate prediction. However, here is one that in the face of several recent horrible examples and with my eyes wide open, I feel safe in making—to wit, the nifty little idea sprung by our noble little President of giving a rebate of 10 percent on the taxes paid on 1925 incomes, will not go through this session or any other. I admit that I am being about as bold as a blind mouse in placing myself thus on record and before I am twitted with doing the unsporting thing of making a non-losable bet on a card already turned, I will go farther and declare that Mr. Coolidge himself will not be for his own idea very long. Probably by the time this appears in print that roistering young blade, the Presidential Spokesman, will have blithely informed the eager corps of correspondents that it never was his idea at all and that the President cannot be responsible for the misinterpretation of his words by the press.

By the time Congress meets this rebate idea I think will be all and entirely wet. Already the amount of cold water cast on it by newspapers such as the New York Times have taken all the starch out and left it limp and bedraggled. Wholly aside from the merits of the Coolidge proposal—and the merits in it are indeed hard to discern—and regardless of whether I am right or wrong about the abandonment by the President of his own brain baby, there are two things about the incident—because that is all it is—that seem particularly interesting to me and on which, so far as I have observed, the daily newspapers have had no comment.

One of these is the noteworthy fact that for the first time since the first Mellon bill appeared way back in 1923, the solidity of the extraordinary newspaper line-up behind Mr. Coolidge seems to have broken. Headed by the New York Times quite a number of journalistic supporters of the first and second Mellon bills rapped Mr. Coolidge over the knuckles for having an idea on finances or taxes that did not come from Mr. Mellon, or rather from Mr. Mellon's immediate vicinity, because it is getting to be known now even by the party organ editors that his financial policy as well as his financial statements are prepared for Mr. Mellon by the group of bright young men whom he has kept around him in the Treasury Department and do not originate with him.

I do not mean to intimate that there was any such breaking away by his press supporters as to indicate permanent hostility or complete loss of confidence or utter disillusionment, or even that they have begun to see the good Calvin as he really is. Not at all. But what I do mean to say is that it indicates what I have over and over again maintained in the past and that is that the bulk of the Coolidge popularity, strength and press support is derived from dear old Mr. Mellon and the forces allied with him and not from his own inherent virtue and force. If Mr. Mellon had had this idea and Mr. Coolidge had with customary solemnity announced his full approval and declared himself in complete accord with the Mellon view, there would scarcely have been a dissenting voice in the press. The same old solidity would have been shown. All down the line they would have shouted hurrah and hosanna and Democratic Senators as well as Republicans would have hastily commented upon the soundness of the suggestion.

But it seems that this time the cautious Calvin carefully concealed his bright thought from Uncle Andrew, neither getting the idea from him nor consulting him about it before taking the corps of correspondents into his confidence. It also seems that when later Mr. Mellon was called into conference Mr. Mellon had quite a different idea, obtained from the aforesaid bright young men in his department. His idea, while the fact is glossed over by such terms as "new interpretation" of the Coolidge plan, is in fact a repudiation of that plan and as such is recognized and labeled by the astute Times and other newspapers which in the past have done so much to fix in the popular mind that even while we sleep Mr. Mellon and Mr. Coolidge labor together tirelessly, unselfishly and with superhuman wisdom and courage to cut taxes for the benefit of the people and reduce the public debt so that all may be happy and prosperous. It really is amazing that when Mr. Coolidge gets a little idea from someone other than the bright young men in the Treasury Department, these same papers should now intimate that his idea is half baked, inspired by the desire to get ahead of the Democrats, rather a small piece of politics and not at all sound financially.

Yet, astonishing as it may seem, such has been the tenor of the comment from quite a few newspapers, not in one section, but in all sections. Democratic papers that while the Mellon bills were pending had nothing but praise for the President have in the past few days spoken out with considerable asperity. Some of them have, as one gentleman expressed it, stopped patting him on his narrow back

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and started kicking him on his narrower shins. The Republican papers of course still roll him in grease, speak of his broad tolerance and open-mindedness, say he is not wedded to his plan, but merely wants to find some way to lighten the burdens of his people. The bulk of the papers are still among his worshipers, but some have certainly backslid. The curious unanimity that marked the support in financial matters last session has gone. Some discordant notes are being sounded in the formerly harmonious chorus. The lesson ought to be perfectly clear to the little White House group and to the President himself. It can be expressed in five words—stick close to Mr. Mellon. I do not believe it will be necessary to point it out to Mr. Coolidge.

The only other point that interests me about this incident is just where the Coolidge idea did come from and who gave it to him. All the correspondents seem agreed that it was his own, that he worked it up entirely by himself without outside aid, that it was spontaneous, in fact, almost impromptu. It is almost poor enough to make you think that that is true, but his whole record convinces you that such a theory just isn't reasonable. Not only during the entire time he has been President, but I am informed by well posted men during the whole of his Massachusetts career, he has been utterly guiltless of original thought, never upon any occasion has uttered an impulsive or unconsidered word. Certainly since he has been in the White House there is no record of his having originated a measure, a policy or an idea. All those for which he has stood have come to him either from members of his Cabinet or from other close but unofficial advisers. It is just too much to ask us to believe that this Mr. Coolidge, with this record, just conceived this idea—bad as it is—in his own bean and blurted it right out. It is too much. It just didn't happen that way. It couldn't. No, somebody gave it to him all right. But who? My suspicions rest upon one of two old Amherst boys.

T. R. B.

Washington.

Notes on Plays

THE entrusting of the rôle of Ersilia Drei in Pirandello's Naked at the Princess Theatre to a young actress like Marguerite Risser starts easily a discussion of a certain phase in our American theatre.

It is a little late for a statement of Pirandello's ideas or his achievement in the drama of our generation. His Six Characters in Search of an Author was successfully produced in New York by Mr. Brock Pemberton three seasons ago and later revived, and we have seen his Henry IV and several other pieces. People interested are already familiar with this dramatist's work, and may follow up their beginnings with the very fine translations of Mr. Arthur Livingston (E. P. Dutton and Company, New York.)

Pirandello's central theme, the conception underlying that whole brilliant world of his, that commedia dell' arte moved up into intellectual piazzas and subtle, swiftly-moving ideal personages, is, briefly noted, of the Stream of Life—Bergson's vital urge—which he conceives as the reality over which masks and fictions and forms appear. Within this reality two forces are implied. One drives toward discovering a body or form that will contain and express the life within it or behind it. The other drives toward the breaking down of the form once found and the flowing onward of this Stream of Life toward new forms. From such a theme Pirandello's dramas are projected and his characters created.

Among these characters and in all the gallery of Pirandello figures there is none more violent or more intensely revealed than that of Ersilia Drei in Naked. She, the simple and humble member of human society, a servant-girl, a philosopher in her own drab walk of life, tries to build for herself a personality, "first"—to quote Mr. Livingston's preface—"as a wife, then as, at least, the heroine of a novel, then as a pitiable, romantic creature for whose misfortunes humanity can be persuaded to shed a passing tear." But Life, the reality, sweeps her on, she lives, she cannot stop in any of these forms or bodies that she tries to make for herself. "She is the humble soul awakening to self-consciousness in the depths of society where she is placed." But tragically she is stripped of her fictions, and dies at length nobody, naked.

That much, even, about this intricate character of so modern and complicated a dramatist as Pirandello, will serve to show what the necessities are for the portrayal of Ersilia Drei. It is essentially a rôle that calls for complexity, subtlety, bitter edge, glowing fluency and the sense of having lived. Miss Risser's performance may be fair, and Mr. Augustin Duncan, in many ways an admirable figure in our midst, that is not the point so much as that nowhere else over the world would you find the innocent possibilities that make such casting likely in the theatre.

In all our periodicals there are advertisements from time to time of books that make you a light in society; the greatest works of time are to be handed out to you in such a way—and even then you need pay only on approval—that with a very few minutes daily you can feel at home in the most cultured social sets. Wives especially accomplish this and reproach their 100 percent husbands, whose preoccupation with business is no excuse, since their wives are quite as taken up with busy days. In exactly the same way, when we come to our theatre, we have some sort of faith that the depths of life, the complexities of souls' histories, the violences of personality and desire, can be made easy and palatable. The cost may be small and the result work as well as if we had struggled through much more, swallowed more, chewed a grimmer and sharper fibre—why not have the caffein out of coffee, the sting out of death? Which is all very young, no doubt, and prosperous, evasive, efficient and able to appear at home anywhere.

From all of which the immediate reflection is that in our theatre there are assuredly to be found actresses no longer young whose gifts and technical equipment might better cope with a rôle like this in Naked. Among the young actresses there is only one I can think of who could do this particular rôle at all, Miss Mary Blair. But we are concerned with these more mature actresses,

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all with some one or more blazing successes behind them and now arrived at what ought to be the high fullness of their powers. They are a little past forty, not blooming with the down of peachlike flappers and not charged with that generalized sex-appeal that the movies best exploit and that is supposed to attract very stirringly the dullest and the finest of spectators. These actresses hunt for plays, they are off the boards most of the time, they sit by and leave school-girls to portray life for us. The casting of the subtlest and most sophisticated plays, all imported from the Continent, all at least grown-up, goes on merrily without them. To sacrifice the full contribution of such players is an astonishing and almost universal performance among us. It points out our audiences as being for the larger part vivacious children, frontier optimists and easy culture subscribers.

There is another side to this argument, however, apart from audiences and producers, and that is the players themselves. They have had formerly immense successes, plays running a year, two years, more. They live in a country where one's friends are embarrassed if one is not successful, and can forgive almost anything if it makes a hit. Personally they cannot bear to step down, to essay a drama that will run for only a month or less, or to take a marvelous rôle that is small and by no means the lead in the piece—this, nearly everybody assures them, would be suicidal, and as things go it would be so. These players then, in their full powers, are apt to want a play that gives them every lead, that will run months and that is good drama, a credit to their standards, a rather large order. They are like that heroine of Mrs. Wharton's who wanted everything in the world and wanted to be served first.

So there we are, and unfortunately there Pirandello is too.

Mr. Holbrook Blinn

At the Henry Miller Theatre a delightful evening is to be had. Pirandello is drawn upon for some of the play's quality, in Molnar's agreeable slight way; but the source of our pleasure derives from one element in the leading player and the dramatist. Both Mr. Holbrook Blinn and Molnar supply an exhibition of leisure, sophistication and technical assurance that carries the entertainment to remarkable success. A young man, in the dewy stage of ideals, hears an amorous conversation between his fiancée and another man, through the walls of the next room at two o'clock in the morning. His world shatters about his ears, for to him she had been the very madonna herself, and indeed she does love him and is trying hard to go straight for him. A friendly dramatist writes a play in which the overheard words are imbedded, and which the young man is later to hear rehearsed. His faith and happiness return. Meanwhile the actual dramatist and the stage dramatist pause, hesitate as to what ought to be the curtain at this point or that, what manner of exposition the piece should have. There is an air of confidence, competence and technical good breeding that is wholly persuasive. And in the production there is a remarkable show of directing, with Mr. Blinn himself everywhere present in it and admirably presented by it.

Miss Estelle Winwood

The piece that we see at the Waldorf Theatre, deduced from the Hungarian of Laslo Lakatos, needs little said of it save that the playing of Miss Estelle Winwood alone makes it worth seeing. The plot deals with a jealous husband, his pretense of going away, his return, his making-up with his wife. In the interim she has been to the opera where her would-be lover was in the party, and he has been to a sort of dive—a scene sometimes written ... genuine point and subtlety—where he has suffered an hallucination through which he recognizes his intimates in the denizens of the place, his mother-in-law in the madam, his wife in a street-walker, and so on.

Mr. Philip Merivale plays the husband a trifle too intensely, but always agreeably and deserving of better surroundings in players and directing. Miss Winwood plays the wife in exactly the right key, gaily, wistfully and with a technique full of wit. No other actress on our stage understands this sort of playing so well as she, how to give just the right pressure and degree of intensity, how to let it pass and take the next nuance.

Stark Young.

The Life Story of Lydia Greensmith

THEY could not have had a more delicious day for the Grand Prix if they had ordered it beforehand, leaving time for at least three fittings, from Patou or Poiret. Therefore I had made fairly certain of not meeting an American at the Musée Carnavalet; the sudden vision of Miss Lydia Greensmith was a miraculous shock to my nerves. These were already slightly shaken, because the cabman had cursed so very heartily when he discovered that I was not, after all and in spite of my new ashen-rose-colored raiment, for Longchamps and the races. I stood staring at the glass case with its little dusty dead rats and their goblin printing-press and thinking that art is long, perhaps, but excessively thin. I was alone save for the sinister plaster presences in the next room and the scarcely more vivacious creature selling postcards to nobody at the door. Then Lydia Greensmith entered from the garden and I was amazed into a voice.

"Oh," I said, "*Oh!*" She was so charming and so absurd, from the enameled pansy at her throat to her small elastic-sided boots, and she was obviously too soft to be plaster and too warm to be wax.

"Bonjour, mademoiselle," she said politely and I trust quite sincerely. It is true that my great-grandmother was a Huguenot, and one does not expect to meet an American at the Carnavalet on the day of the Grand Prix. The moment she spoke I perceived that she came from Connecticut.

"Do let me help you with that heavy bag," I cried at once, seizing it by its worn handle. "And your box; goodness gracious, you haven't been dragging a great leather box across the courtyard, have you? Isn't there a porter somewhere about?"

"At the races," said Miss Greensmith sadly. "You see,

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I tipped them all last night; the chambermaid, too. It's always a mistake; one gets no service the next day. A taxi, perhaps."

"The animal at the door might find one," I suggested, but she shook her head.

"Really they're all cross with me for leaving," she murmured. "I know it's flattering, but so awkward about the bags. And you, my dear . . . no, really, you mustn't spoil your pretty gloves. But if you could see whether there is a taxi in the street . . . "

"There is," I said, "mine; it's waiting for me. May I take you anywhere?"

"I thought I would go first to the brasserie on the corner, for a 'fine,' " Miss Greensmith replied timidly. "It's melancholy, this parting. . . . Goujon's darling lions . . . ah me, how I shall miss it all! I've been very happy; I've loved it so, you see; perhaps I'm making a mistake." And she began to cry.

"A 'fine' is indicated," I thought. Aloud I said, "I'll tell the taxi man to keep an eye on your luggage."

"Please," she whispered. "But are you quite sure, my dear, that the man's reliable? I have one or two little trifles . . . "

"Not from the Carnavalet?" I asked; I couldn't help it. The bag had seemed mysteriously heavy. We turned into the rue des Francs-Bourgeois.

"Only from the cellars, child, and gifts, all of them; gifts from the government. Defective pieces; broken fans and bits of porcelain. It's a matter of sentiment, entirely, but so kind of the dear Ministers to understand."

"But do you mean," I cried, when we were seated at the small green table with a "fine" between us, "that you were actually living there?"

"Yes," said Miss Greensmith simply.

"No," I said to the waiter, "I prefer an infusion. Camomile. Better for the nerves."

"They permitted it out of pure kindness, and because my uncle had been Governor of Connecticut. Yes, the fact that I am a gentlewoman undoubtedly had something to do with it, but that doesn't alter the circumstances of their amazing kindness."

"You're very pretty, you know," I said somewhat impertinently. It was true; she had enormous lavender-gray eyes in a fragile three-cornered face. I guessed that her curls had once been dark, but now they were silvery and shining with a moonlight fairness.

"That has nothing to do with it," she answered with an air of pride and soft reproof. "It was pure altruistic kindness on the part of the Ministers, I assure you. I asked the government if I might, mentioning my uncle and a few distinguished ancestors, and I was allowed to live in three small rooms in the attic. No modern conveniences, of course, but an exquisite view. It is not generally known; I hope you will not speak of it, my dear, particularly as I am leaving."

"Ah, such a lovely, lovely place to live! How have you the heart to leave it?" I demanded. "Remember the quiet courtyard and the sunlight on the frosty stone, and the rooms as clear and elegant as the inner shapes of flowers! Remember the little coach and horses carved from mother of pearl and gold, and you might look at it every single hour! Ah, but you were lucky, and I think you are rather an idiot to go home!"

"I liked the earrings made in the form of a guillotine even better," said Miss Greensmith wistfully. "Only, my dear, I'm not going home to America, you see. I've had quite enough of the Grand Central Station, thank you.

"Yes, I was born in Connecticut; you are entirely right about that," she continued shyly. "Near Fairfield; pleasant country, especially in the spring. Lilacs and apple-blossoms; there was a hedge of white lilacs before the door. But I was always afraid to go out of the door; I never was properly adventurous until I grew up. I rarely left the house until I was past thirty, and then only in the cool of the evening, in a blonde lace veil. Ours was a huge old house; the roofs were as broad and green as other people's front lawns, and one hot summer I had actually a little garden of lilies of the valley in the shade of the north chimney. The peaks and gables used to rise above me like green hills; they were covered with moss, and the treetops made other hills beyond them."

"But why did you go away?" I asked. "And what about the Grand Central Station? Another 'fine'?"

"Please," said Miss Greensmith. "A l'eau. Well, my child, my dear parents died for one thing, and my brother married a film star. I did not care for the curtains she selected for the drawing-room, and I thought I might be happier in New York."

"And were you?" I inquired, pouring out another cup of camomile tea.

"I never saw New York," said Miss Greensmith, "except from the Grand Central Station. I never dared to venture into the street. I lived in the Grand Central Station for fifteen years.

"I arrived before it was really finished," she went on, "and at first it was somewhat uncomfortable, but I soon grew accustomed to it, and then for a time I was very happy. It was beautiful, you know, in a queer way; that great floor glittering like golden ice, and all the strange long corridors and lighted galleries. And then the shops; I did enjoy the shops, I must confess."

"But where did you sleep?" I asked rather nervously, sipping my infusion.

"Oh, at the Biltmore, sometimes, and sometimes at the Commodore, and then towards the end I tried the Roosevelt for a change," said Miss Greensmith with a pensive smile.

"Didn't you ever have the curiosity to go to the Belmont?"

"I considered it, but I couldn't bring myself to cross Forty-second Street, my dear," Miss Greensmith admitted, sighing. "But what did it matter, with my whole world under one vast zodiacal roof? I had everything I needed for that fifteen years."

"Then you must know that little shop where I used to have tea with William, and the buttermilk place, and the place where they sell Irish dulse, and the secret entrance from the Yale Club!"

"But naturally," said Miss Greensmith, "I know it all; nobody else knows it as I do. But of course I prefer the Carnavalet."

"I can quite comprehend that," I answered sympathet-

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ically. "And now you are leaving it forever. Why? In the name of all adorable gimcracks, why?"

"I am going to Rome," said Miss Greensmith. "Not over, you know; I am an Episcopalian. Just to Rome."

"'Which is the sepulchre . . . '" I said. "'Go thou to Rome, at once the Paradise . . . '"

"Precisely," Miss Greensmith replied. "That is precisely what I mean."

"Oh, is it, really and truly?" I cried, trembling a little in spite of the camomile tea. "But do you mean what I mean, I wonder? Is that the reason you are going to Rome?"

"Yes," said Miss Greensmith, "the Protestant cemetery." And she began to cry.

"Don't," I begged her, which was unfair, because I also had begun to cry.

"The authorities have given me permission," she whispered finally, touching her wet lashes with a cobweb handerchief. "I shall sit there all day long, every day for the rest of my life. 'From the world's bitter wind, seek shelter in the shadow . . . ' I love the adorable gimcracks of the Carnavalet, but I believe I've outgrown them, just as I outgrew Connecticut and the Grand Central Station. I don't care for anything now, except—except the Protestant cemetery. And in the evening I shall drink Asti Spumante and read . . . "

"Of course," I said, "you're quite right. I think, if you don't mind, I shall go to Rome with you. But first, you must come with me to the Ritz Bar to have a champagne cocktail."

"Yes," said Miss Lydia Greensmith, "I'd like to do that, my dear. Only don't forget that we've left my luggage at the Carnavalet."

Then, as I went to fetch it, she took a volume of Shelley out of her reticule and laid it upon the little green table. The book fell open in the middle, where the blue silk marker divided its enchanted leaves.

"Another 'fine,' if you please," I heard her murmur to the waiter in her French of Fairfield in Connecticut.

ELINOR WYLIE.

Tariff and Character

IF I were a Frenchman I should be dismayed by the swiftness with which the latest attack of xenophobia has passed away; I think I should be a little ashamed at the parallel between the fever-chart of France's hatred of Americans and the more familiar line which traces the movement of the franc. In mid-July the franc touched fifty to the dollar and Americans were stoned on the Butte; by October the franc was temporarily stable at about thirty-four and mutilated statues to American heroes were restored. I should be ashamed because the whole point which France is making at the present time is that money is not the only everlastingly important thing in the world; it would be humiliating to think that only the lack of money is the source of that idea.

I do not say that if I were a Frenchman I would hate America; only that I would understand why my countrymen hated her and would frankly urge them to intensify and redirect their hate. At present all emotion about foreigners centres in Paris which has always been invaded by barbarians and has always known how to civilize them. I could make an oration in Poincaré's best Sunday afternoon manner, pointing out that for a century before the War foreigners came to France because they loved French food and French wines, the French tongue and the thoughts expressed in that tongue, French inns and French gaiety and French history; and that in the eight years since the War France has been overrun with people ignorant or contemptuous of these things, people who come to France because they can chew their own gum and smoke their own Lucky Strikes and drink their own cocktails and lodge at international hotels and speak their own language with infinitely more comfort and at less expense than in their own country. I could say with more truth and less passion than a Sunday afternoon conférence demands that the object of the invasion of France had changed; it is no longer to undergo our culture, but to undermine it.

But at this point I am afraid I should have to depart from Poincaré and his audience and suggest that the Americans are not entirely at fault. I should have to suggest that the French are actually inviting a barbarism beside which the hordes of tourists are all Walpoles on the Grand Tour. In brief this barbarism is the ideal of France as an industrial competitor of the United States. And if I were a Frenchman I would allow myself, at this point, the extreme luxury of a general idea, before coming to my proof: the idea that nationalism, in our time, is the remorseless enemy of patriotism.

For it is nationalism which is at the present moment suggesting tariff laws of such far-reaching effect that they will ultimately change the French habits of living and perhaps even their habits of mind; and it is patriotism to care for and above all things to preserve those habits which in their sum make up the character of a people. Nationalism which seems honestly to want everybody employed at good wages suggests a law refusing patent and copyright unless the protected article be manufactured in the country granting protection. It is an easy law for America, and a bitter one for France. The nationalists call on "Labor" to support such laws, because they "make work." And industrialists support them because it means that if Mr. Henry Ford should refuse to manufacture in France, his patents would be invalidated and become public property. But a patriot, who loved deeply the way of living which gives his country its distinction and its tone, would see at once where this form of protection leads. He would see that Mr. Ford would manufacture in France and draw a Citroen in his wake and that ultimately French workmen would lose another fragment of their craftsmanship, of their character, and of their independence. He would see that a German formula for mouthwash, put into production according to German methods, would ultimately leave a foreign taste in French mouths; and that the alternative to accepting foreign products made by Frenchmen in accordance with foreign systems, is to make French products by foreign systems, which is equally an outrage to character and to sense.

The pure economist will clearly see the advantage of this development in productive methods. It means that the best methods will prevail and that no country will

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be able to afford to manufacture anything which it cannot manufacture well. It is only the amateur who will be distressed. But the real lover of foreign countries will insist that Frenchmen have a right to their terrible cigarettes and their oddly cut clothes and their two hours for lunch with the iron shutter rolled down over the shop front. He will not ever want the French, or any other nation, to be quaint; but prefer them to be quaint if that is the only way they can be themselves.

Those who have not seen France before the War are probably a bit fanciful when they claim to discern a higher degree of Americanization every time they go over. All I myself can testify to is the spread of American products for sale to American tourists, an entirely normal development since the tourists themselves are spreading more widely; I can testify also that within two miles of a prodigious American colony, there lies an entirely French village almost unconscious of foreign influences. But just as it has always been chic for a rich young Frenchman to have his clothes made in England and to belong to a club with an English name, so it is correct now for the middle class to take up Anglo-Saxon sports; and eventually, when economic pressure asserts itself, when it becomes actually cheaper to use foreign goods, the whole of France will lose some of its superficial character. It will only be when foreign methods of industry begin to prevail, that the underlying character of the people will be touched.

I have never traveled along the country roads of France without becoming enraged at the callous stupidity of the makers of farmers' carts which, in France, have the shafts attached directly to the body of the wagon. It means lack of play and a vast unnecessary hardship for the horse. It would not touch the French character, I suppose, to change to our type of wagon. Yet I think it would be a disaster if this change were brought about not by a gradual development, in which French ingenuity would create a French type of wagon, but by the unloading of our ideas and our methods on a nation economically unable to resist. The process is already making headway, and of course affects such a sensitive profession as, say, cooking, first of all. You do not have to be a Frenchman to be aware that the restaurant cuisine of Paris is slowly deteriorating. It does not matter that that cuisine is still the most attractive in the world; it matters that French chefs at home are undergoing the experience of those who come abroad, they are matching indifference in cuisine with indifference in cooking, and sacrificing a cassoulet to baked beans and apple pie. Four years ago eight or nine restaurants one knew seemed unaffected; three years ago six remained; last year two or three. The wine-waiter is prouder today of his Bronxes and Sidecars than of his Beaune and armagnac. The couturiers of Paris, however they disguise their makeshifts under the name of "dynamic design," are betraying French fashions to sport and business.

To the practical man all protest against these money-making changes is pure dilettantism. But it is quite possible that the amateur who takes delight in the differences between peoples, in the special qualities of each, is at heart a better economist than the abstract theorist of profit and loss. Isn't it possible that it will take centuries before the French character is sufficiently subdued to undergo American methods, isn't it possible that the French will never catch up to us, and that the long period of adjustment, sacrificing what is really unique in themselves, will prove all a waste, at the end of which the France that has always been our "second country" will have passed away?

GILBERT SELDES.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Lewisohn Explains

SIR: Just a word of comment on a paragraph in Mr. Soule's interesting review of my book in your October 20 number.

I am frankly perplexed by Mr. Soule's characterization of my description of the Baltimore and Ohio shop experiment as an instance of a "distortion." His point seems to be that I do not mention that the plan rests upon an agreement specifying that "benefits derived shall be shared between the parties to the agreement." My reference to the Baltimore and Ohio experiment was merely incidental to a general discussion of the constructive assistance that unions might afford management, and I made no effort to analyze the experiment in extenso. For, as I explained in the preface, my book made no pretense of exhaustiveness.

Mr. Soule's conclusion that the success of the Baltimore and Ohio plan was largely due to this profit sharing of benefits device, is probably sound but no doubt there were other features of the plan that also contributed. I mentioned one of them in the book, namely: "wise union leadership." As a matter of fact this kind of profit-sharing arrangement has also had a prominent place in some non-union employe-representation plans. That in this case this profit-sharing feature is part of a plan worked out with a union is interesting, but in using the Baltimore and Ohio experiment as purely an incidental illustration of another aspect I did not have occasion to mention this one. There could be no question of my frank admiration of the Baltimore and Ohio experiment as I say, "Reports of what has taken place indicate a remarkable achievement." Under the circumstance to call the failure to mention this particular aspect a distortion seems rather inappropriate.

SAM A. LEWISOHN.

New York, N. Y.

[The plan of union-management coöperation inaugurated on the Baltimore and Ohio is not a profit-sharing plan and has little in common with profit-sharing plans in non-union employe-representation schemes. The important distinction is that it rests on an *agreement* with an autonomous labor organization—an agreement to coöperate and to share the benefits of coöperation. Mr. Lewisohn's letter shows that he still does not recognize the fundamental difference between this and an employer-devised bait handed down to employes who are denied the right of autonomous organization. —G. S.]

The Most Damaging Criticism

SIR: The most damaging criticism of Will Durant's History of Philosophy that I have seen occurs on page 32 of the book itself. Plato is quoted as saying, "Damon tells—and I can quite believe it—that when modes of music change, the fundamental laws of the state change with them." A footnote says, "Cf. Daniel O'Connell: 'Let me write the songs of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws.'"

There are a good many suspiciously free and easy cross references, but this is the worst. Of course the sentence does not refer to music at all any more than would the mention of Burns's songs, just as the laws in question are not laws regulating the emission of long term securities, for instance. What the speaker meant was exactly what one of us would mean today if he said, "Let me write the school histories and newspaper propaganda, etc." It was hard, for instance, to eradicate Jacobinism as long as children learned history from Jacobite ballads. This is veritably a howler to have been committed by an historian of thought.

Paris, France. LEO STEIN.

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Facing Europe

Facing Europe, by Frederick Bausman. New York: The Century Company. 330 pages. $3.

THE attitude toward Europe reflected in American writings in the eight years since the Armistice has undergone a change, according closely with the gradual stabilizing of that continent. For the first few years it was the habit of American observers to view with pity and complacency the distracted situation of Europe, its depreciated currencies, its poverty darkening to famine, its multitude of petty wars, its recurring political crises and revolutions, and to speculate generously upon the possibilities of this country's aiding in the necessary reconstruction. But with the recovery of Europe, its growing independence and its resentment of American superiority, there has come a change. American writers express no longer pity for Europe, but a growing fear that its revival is fraught with peril to this country, and that the moral and political aloofness which we so proudly assumed with our rejection of the Treaty of Versailles will be broken by force, to our own undoing. We are beginning to be afraid of Europe; not only of the countries which we were taught to consider our enemies, first Germany and then Russia, but of our erstwhile associates. We are beginning to learn one lesson of the War, that the predatory spirit of the secret treaties and the technique of intrigue and propaganda by which we were led to fight for them are present dangers in a world not yet made safe for democracy; that the encirclement of Germany and the violation of Russia may be sauces for the gander as well as for the geese. One of these examples of the neo-alarmist school was discussed in these columns last week, Mr. Carter's Man Is War. Another is Judge Bausman's Facing Europe.

Judge Bausman was the first American authority to go largely into the question of the original responsibility for the War. His Let France Explain was the earliest complete denial, in the United States, of the dogma of Germany's war guilt, proclaimed by the authority of the Treaty of Versailles. No one of his countrymen at the present time who has looked at the facts, with the exception of a few professors zealous of their vested interests in textbooks, doubts that the assertion of Germany's sole guilt is a damnable lie, and that disinterested search for the chief author of the War leads to many questions which only France can answer. Judge Bausman's present volume might be considered a sequel, a study of the responsibility for the prolongation of the War, a sort of Let America Explain. It is an examination of the circumstances under which the United States entered the War, and a consideration of the position of this country with reference to Europe in the light of those circumstances. It may be suggested that there remains a third volume still to be written, a study of the responsibility of the United States for the Peace, through the direct contributions to the Treaty of Versailles of Mr. Wilson and the enlightened and disinterested experts whom he took with him to Paris.

Judge Bausman gives a clear and precise account of our entrance into the War based on the published records of House, Lane, Houston, Bryan, Lansing, Page and others. His conclusion is that Wilson, strongly English in sympathy, was nevertheless outraged in his sense of fairness by the British plan of blockade which violated the rights of neutrals in order to starve Germany. Had Wilson maintained this position he would have had the power with which to force the Entente into a negotiated peace, as proposed by Germany in December, 1916; but betrayed openly by House and Page, secretly by his own leanings, and buffeted by a public opinion excited by propaganda, he found this weapon broken in his hand. Accordingly the attempts to secure a peace conference, about which Colonel House was busily running to and fro in 1915, were as futile as Henry Ford's Peace Ship. The failure to stand up for the rights of neutrals on the high seas forced Germany into the submarine campaign which automatically brought the United States into the War.

It is possible to agree in general with the findings of Judge Bausman's post-mortem, and yet dissent from the dark implications of his forecast. The underlying thesis of his book is the inevitable conflict between the interests of the British Empire and the United States. He points out that the life of the Empire is foreign trade, by which alone the swollen population of the islands is enabled to live. He shows how, as the result of the War, Great Britain has been enabled to increase enormously her already vast reserves of raw material in all parts of the world and consolidate her control of the seas, while the United States is using up its natural resources at a terrific rate and has abandoned its position as a sea-going power, whether manifested by its navy or its merchant marine. He draws a deadly parallel between the relation to the British Empire of Germany in the days of her industrial and commercial expansion, and that of the United States today. "The real grievance between Great Britain and Germany was the growth of German trade. . . . As early as September 11, 1897, the Saturday Review . . . describes a situation which is that of the United States and Great Britain:

> England, with her long history of successful aggression, with her marvelous conviction that in pursuing her own interests she is spreading light among nations, and Germany, bone of the same bone, blood of the same blood, compete in every corner of the globe. . . . If Germany were extinguished tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, there is not an Englishman in the world who would not be the richer. Nations have fought for years over a city or a right of succession; must they not fight for two hundred and fifty million pounds of yearly commerce?"

The "next war" between the United States and the British Empire is envisaged likewise by Mr. John Carter in Man Is War. Mr. Carter, like Judge Bausman, fears that the sentimental bond between the two peoples will break under the tension of commercial rivalry, that our subservience to British interests will not prove a sufficient guarantee of peace, that Great Britain will get tired of defending us if we do not make a show of taking care of ourselves; and "should Great Britain ever give the word 'Go!' to America's other neighbors, the United States might find herself hopelessly outmatched in a world war for her destruction." Both writers accordingly advocate preparedness without, however, facing squarely the obvious dilemma. The philosophy of preparedness brooks no half-hearted service. It demands all or nothing. To give all makes life not worth the living for man, woman or child. Moreover, for the United States to use its wealth to build naval power to threaten Great Britain's control of the seaways would be to bring nearer a possibility which it should be the object of both peoples to avoid. A realistic view of the situation would seem to dictate a reliance on the forces which are tending to eliminate war; and an alarmist view would urge the strengthening of those forces.

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Granting that the British Empire is a monstrous growth, and that British statesmanship envisages a world in which civilized peoples are tempted into warfare in order that the uncivilized may be sacrificed to support the congested industrial population of Great Britain, it may be doubted whether that population will ever again fight for rights of exploitation which leave its mass in misery. It is much to be doubted whether it could command the necessary alliance even among its colonial dependencies.

The present attitude of European nations to the United States is indeed a factor to be reckoned with, and reckoned wisely. The interest on American investments in Europe may prove a burden too heavy to be borne or a bait to cupidity too strong to resist, especially since the United States has had the incredible fatuity to abrogate the safeguards of private property in war in order that the profiteers through the alien property custodian's office should be secure in their gains. Mere common sense demands the reassertion of the historic position of the United States in this matter, even at the expense of the taxpayer or of the personal liberty of a few eminent citizens. The debts owed the United States will certainly prove an increasing source of bitterness. Judge Bausman writes feelingly of the ingratitude of the French who refuse to pay, according to the Mellon-Berenger agreement, even what they took from us in the way of money and supplies after the Armistice, which they used in setting up a régime in Europe which made our aims in the War nonsense, and our pledges for the peace a national dishonor. Nevertheless, since we can never collect more of the debts than the debtors are willing to pay we may as well face the situation first as last, and charge off the loss in money, like that in human life and in national self-respect, to our ignorance and ineptitude. Judge Bausman makes his main argument on the thesis that we could have ended the last war without getting into it. His system of education, unpleasant as it is and wounding to national pride, may prove the best preparation for the future.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

The Flicker, Not the Flame

The Outlook for American Prose, by Joseph Warren Beach. Chicago: The Chicago University Press. 285 pages. $2.50.

TEMPERAMENTALLY Professor Beach is not a hair-splitter; but because of the very limited objectives of his book there creeps into it a faint flavor of hair-splitting. Temperamentally he is not a pedant, but because of the microscopic methods he applies to American writers there creeps in also a faint flavor of pedantry. The title of his book is a misnomer, for here are, really, nothing but a group of unrelated essays having unity of theme, but lacking unity of development. You will look almost in vain for any specific theories as to the outlook for American prose; you will look almost in vain for a discussion of the influences which are converting American prose into something freer or more restricted, something better or worse, something more indigenous or less indigenous, than it has been in the past or is just now. What you find are many observations on the style of various American writers, and what you find Professor Beach often to mean by style is chiefly a matter of correct writing.

All this suggests the work of a university man as dull as he is technical, whereas in a rather self-conscious way Professor Beach is as diverting as he is large-minded. The real trouble is that the wider vision of the man has not replaced the narrower vision of the critic. Professor Beach, the man, writes interestingly and attractively of people like Hergesheimer, Dreiser, Anderson, Cabell, Mencken, without academic reservations as to their position in literature; but when Professor Beach, the critic, attempts to evaluate their style, he either likes it as any appreciative reader might like it, or dislikes it as any classroom instructor might dislike it. You do not define style by pointing out errors in usage, and you do not "place" style with regard to the future of American prose by commenting on it as merely individual expression. To trace the vogue of certain overworked words from season to season is good enough sport, but not intimately related to the outlook for American prose. To show Van Vechten's liking for unusual words, unless you show how it is influencing our style, is a good enough point concerning Van Vechten, but not intimately related to the outlook for American prose. In his chapter called Auguries Professor Beach gets more closely down to business, though even there he cannot always dispense with minutiæ to deal with tendencies.

Call this book Papers on Contemporary Style and one can credit it with more than usual discernment and good sense. The shortcomings of such a book would be less grave than those of a book called The Outlook for American Prose, though one important shortcoming would still exist. Style in this book—whatever its title—is not considered in the one sense where it has real meaning, in the sense of organic creation. Style is art and personality, not grammar and definitions, and too often Professor Beach stops with the grammar and definitions. His title being what it is, surely he should consider the advance of American prose in connection with the advance of American artistic consciousness, artistic experiment, artistic uniqueness. He does not eye the future with that in mind at all.

I have harped on Professor Beach's inaccurate title not so much to emphasize its inaccuracy as to make plain that the book, in failing to justify that title, scarcely justifies itself. Unless the whole body of it is to be observed and its individual tendencies and collective significance are to be pointed out, there is little of importance to say of our contemporary prose, as prose. This book is easy and pleasant to read, but to borrow a phrase, it consecrates the flicker, not the flame.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER.

Thick and Thin

My Mortal Enemy, by Willa Cather. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

Preface to a Life, by Zona Gale. New York: D. Appleton and Company. $2.

HERE are two of our most sensitive and sincere women novelists. Miss Cather's book is a long short story. Miss Gale's is somewhat more than the regulation nine innings. Miss Gale, if not quite because she offers the fuller meal, gives us much more to think about, and her attempt, which does not altogether succeed, is more interesting than Miss Cather's more competent but thinner portrait. Each of them has done better before.

My Mortal Enemy, in a short space, tries for a full-length portrait. The story is implicit in the portrait. Neither story nor portrait can mean as much to us as A Lost Lady, nor the best parts of The Professor's House, for Miss Cather's work has a mineral quality which is

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at times solid, but at others—and this is one of them—merely smoothly polished. The lady in this case, Myra Henshawe, is a good deal of a "character," a fact of which Miss Cather is rather too conscious, for she invites us, as visitors to a gallery, to stand now here, now there, now forward, now back a few paces, so that the portrait's various lights and facets may change with the angle and the distance. A serious, considered painting, built up in browns and grays and the mellower ochres, but with one of those rather miscellaneous faces which hint that the artist has done better with separate traits than with the subject as a whole. Myra Henshawe, in spite of the careful evidence as to her nature, doesn't altogether add up.

There is perhaps no more difficult technical decision in writing a novel than the position of the narrator. Is he to be the author directly, or a third person within the book, and if so, will he also be within the action and the mood as well, or in a vague sort of liaison with the author, and not of character's rank and individuality? Miss Cather seems to have chosen clearly in her own mind, but I often feel that the choice subtracts considerably from her novels. Her narrators are within the book, usually an intimate part of what is going on, but their prime allegiance is to her: it is with her tongue that they speak, with her eyes that they see. They do not merely record, they manage, interpret, choose and feel, they are extremely important; they have power, delegated by the author, to rule the mood and the action completely. In fact, they are Miss Cather, under a thin disguise. Why the disguise? That Miss Cather is discovered talking to us, when we thought it was going to be someone else, is often disturbing. For her narrators are always the same. The person who guides us through My Antonia is supposedly a man, the guide through My Mortal Enemy is a young woman, and what each reveals to us suffers unaccountably from the fact that these so possibly dissimilar guides are exactly alike. A grosser instance: Tom Outland, manifestly the central figure in The Professor's House, is at first presented at second-hand, in absence, in recollection—distantly, with something of the mysterious clarity which the right amount of distance can lend to people in a book. But suddenly we are seeing his life through Tom Outland himself, and we are somewhat surprised by certain familiar ways of looking at things, a certain spacious, but for him rather feminine sensitiveness, which ceases to surprise us when we realize that Miss Cather has invaded Tom Outland, indeed ejected and extinguished him. So with My Mortal Enemy: the young girl becomes more and more palpably Miss Cather herself. I don't know why this should lessen the sharpness and validity of Myra Henshawe, but it does.

Miss Gale's story of the breaking up of the ice covering a personality, of a man's piercing through the everyday wall to a vision of the inner meaning of things, is a much more complicated affair. For Miss Gale has chosen a station within the circle of her people, a post inside of the heart and head of her chief character, a relationship requiring a more delicate adjustment and a more skilful handling than Miss Gale brings to it. The deliquescence of Mead's worldly shell is accompanied, unfortunately, by the disintegration of what personality the character may have at first possessed for us. This was at best vague. Mead, the central figure, with whose every mental process and spiritual adventure we are to become familiar before the end of the book, is too central. He and his author stand concentrically, surrounded by characters who, perhaps because they are being seen from the outside, are much clearer in outline. Mead is hardly a person: rather the embodiment of an experience. The experience is described with a sober tenderness and freshness of insight, but the person is lost. This has been true of Miss Gale before: of Faint Perfume, for instance, I can now recall only the admirable figure of the old man, brought into sharp focus with a few dozen strokes. In Preface to a Life, Mr. Mead senior, so much less important than his son, is yet a far more substantial figure. The Aunts and Doctor Dove, even more secondary, are also better defined than the protagonist himself. Why? Because Miss Gale never attempts to get inside of them, being content to report their speech and actions, which, though she herself invented them, have power to surprise us. When Miss Gale brings to the making of a character humor, sympathy and an external point of view, she creates; when she is on the inside of a character looking out, her sympathy may be even greater, but her humor, her amused watchfulness, her gift of surprise desert her, she flounders, and the character simply goes to pieces. Chiefly, I think, because in Preface to a Life Miss Gale is more concerned with spiritual experience, as a separate experience, than with the spiritual experience of a particular person. It is a case of the cart before the horse. Does not such an experience matter to us as readers, and remain with us, according to the believability and independence of the character chosen for its illustration? Is not a novelist—whose main concern must always be the creation of characters—mistaken when she allows the validity of her people to be exceeded, diluted, drowned by something she wants to have happen to them?

If the whole were as good as many of the parts Preface to a Life would be a very distinguished book indeed. Miss Gale's minor characters, as I have said, are usually very well done, and there are a number of uncommonly lovely bits of description. One misses, throughout, what one misses so much in most novels: anonymity; the author is so much about, or whispering in the wings. Miss Gale suffers from a particularly destructive form of what might be called the Helping Hand. On the surface, it amounts to no more than a recurrent mannerism, but the mannerism is indicative of an unsteadiness in the point of view which subtly deprives the characters of their red-blood corpuscles. On almost every other page is to be found a character who does or says something which is immediately qualified by an "as if . . . ": "he rang *as if* he were confident of hearing footsteps"; "on this she paused *as if* on a new emotion . . . "; "something opened and closed on the air, *as if* innumerable doors had swung open . . . "; "This urge for the different was loosed by the sound of the horn, *as* by a far shore line"; "abruptly he felt *as if* the flesh of the child lay tightly upon his . . . " As if Miss Gale were lending to her people feelings which she hoped they might have, but which she half suspected were too tenuous for them, and too much like her own. A trick which proves, I think, the point that Miss Gale has not solved the question, Where shall I stand in relation to my characters, within them, outside of them, halfway between them and the rest of their world?

There is a fundamental clarity in writing of fiction which can only be achieved by solving this intimate question. Before the more visible problems of the novel are solved, this obscurer question must be dealt with, plainly and satisfactorily. Failure so to deal with it does much to handicap the skill of gifted writers such as Willa Cather and Zona Gale. R. L.

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In Search of Democracy

The Democratic Way of Life, by Thomas Vernor Smith. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 211 pages. $1.75.

THE author leaves us in no doubt as to what he is after. He is interested in democracy as an end. "Without the emotional urge that comes from contemplation of our goal, we shall degrade humanity's greatest enthusiasm into a barren formalism. . . . The following popular exposition of democratic ideals is meant to season daily duties with the joy of social vision." The publisher's blurb enthusiastically tells us that Mr. Smith "has re-endowed 'Liberty, Fraternity, Equality'—worn slogans of a goal that has never been reached—with some of the spirit of the days when they were magic words." Well, maybe. At any rate, Mr. Smith makes a good try at it. The book is excellent preaching—preaching inspired with obvious sincerity and adorned with no inconsiderable number of purple patches. Mr. Smith's aspirations for eloquence, it must be added, do not prevent him from turning some rather neat and searching phrases. When he discusses "Fraternity, Liberty and Equality"—the order is his own—he keeps in pretty close touch with reality, including economic reality.

I found the most interesting chapters in the book the last: those on Democracy and the Day's Work and Democratic Leadership. The good life, the author is convinced, must be found in work. "The day's work of common men and in the distribution of its products furnish . . . the meeting place for economics, politics and ethics." Work must be humanized. And work can be humanized by trying to apply to it certain characteristics which Mr. Smith finds in professional life. The particular characteristics which he emphasizes are the "socialization of experience," "the equalization of opportunity," and the "naturalization of ideals." Law is one of the professions which he cites. There are those who find it rather difficult to discover in law, as commonly practiced in the United States, the values which the author eloquently praises.

More convincing is the discussion on Democratic Leadership—a discussion well summed up in the concluding sentence: "A social order in which every man lives richly his own life, leads his fellows where his knowledge justifies, and follows them where his ignorance compels—that is the way of life which shineth more and more unto a democratic day."

Somehow I have an uneasy feeling that this book may approach nearer to greatness, or at least to significance than the foregoing paragraphs have indicated. Book reviewing is queer business. Another reviewer, or this reviewer in a different mood, might write in quite different terms. Let me make a confession. I read a considerable part of the book on a crowded train bound for Passaic, New Jersey. All around me shrieked the particularly blatant headlines of the tabloids my neighbors were reading. My own mind was preoccupied with some of the problems of an eight month's strike. Could anybody, I wonder, take the old words, Liberty, Fraternity and Equality and endow them with meaning that would lift our alleged democracy above the Passaic level? (Not that Passaic is essentially worse than Pittsburgh or Podunk.) If so, how would the job be done? If I did not find the answer in this book, perhaps the fault is not the author's. At any rate, here is a book worth reading—a book which in spirit, style and insight escapes the saccharine sentimentality, the unreality, the conscious or unconscious insincerity which I have grown to associate with most speaking and writing in praise of democracy.

NORMAN THOMAS.

Another Bogus Ghost

The Book Without a Name: Being the Eighteenth Century Journal of an Unmarried English Lady to Her Natural Son. Edited by E. R. P. New York: Brentano's. 292 pages. $2.50.

PERHAPS it is just as well that occasionally a mute inglorious Milton should be allowed to moulder in his unknown grave. At any rate, there exists a respectable class of fellows called scholars who wish to have and should have a monopoly of this ghoulish business of exhumation. There is another kind of literary grave-robber which is somehow not looked on as quite so respectable, though they disturb no decent dust and violate the sanctity of no sepulchre—for they dig up the remains of authors who have never existed. If their hoax is successful, as it has been in the cases of Defoe, McPherson and Chatterton, a complaisant world is only too ready to forgive and forget; but if the resurrection is an unconvincing one, the world is just as apt to forget without forgiving.

In The Diary of a Young Lady of Fashion we had one strange example of a lady trying to palm herself off on us as older than she really was, and in The Book Without a Name we meet another. This later adventuress, it must be admitted, is less charming than her predecessor. The somewhat over-hoydenish airs and graces which the Fashionable Young Lady revealed to us were in general attractive, and she managed to convey a plausibly eighteenth century atmosphere, if not always an accurate historical picture. The unfortunate woman who is supposed to be the author of The Book Without a Name gives herself a great many more airs, though there is never a touch of the hoyden about her. Quite the contrary. She does not consider herself unfortunate. We are never allowed to forget that she is the grave mistress of an extremely weighty mind, with enlightened views on a good many subjects: one who has carried every appeal to Reason, and when Reason has sometimes given no answer, has hied her to the strict tribunal of a Pure Heart. She is one of these somewhat alarming females who not only look before they leap, but even spoil the natural grace of their fall by gestures which they imagine to be dignified and explanatory. Her story is told in a word: disbelieving in the base ties of marriage, she forms a union with a correspondingly upright and enlightened gentleman, and between the two of them they produce the young bastard for whom this book is supposed to have been composed. Almost none of the incidents of her love-affair is allowed to brighten the author's monotone in her discursive notes on life as she has threnodied and rhapsodized it. We are moved neither to praise nor to blame: for she has spread between herself and the reader the chaste gray mantle of indifference.

The book is written in a style so foreign to that of the eighteenth century (for instance) that the editor feels called upon to make some explanation, which she does by referring apologetically to "certain quaint and rather unusual words." To one with such a command of quaint and rather unusual words, it must have been a fierce temptation to give the book a name. It is a temptation which the reviewer shares.

T. S. M.

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Asiatic History

Asia: A Short History, by Herbert H. Gowen. Boston: Little, Brown and Company (Atlantic Monthly Press Publication). 423 pages. $3.50.

An Outline History of China, by Herbert H. Gowen and Josef W. Hall. New York: D. Appleton and Company. 325 pages. $4.

THE attempt to give unity to the story of the development of Asia does not quite come off. Probably it could not. There is no unity in the story of Asia, because Asia is not a unity, except geographically. It is doubtful whether the racial kinship between the various Asiatic peoples is much closer than that between Asiatics and Europeans. Mass migrations did not stop at arbitrarily drawn lines. Even if there is a closer kinship among Asiatics, their seclusion one from another has minimized its effects, as seclusion has also minimized the effects of such cultural crossing as there has been. The Chinese and Japanese adopted Indian Buddhism, yet if the Chinese in their spiritual address to life are closer to the East Indians than to the English or Italians, they also differ from the East Indian at least as much as do the English from, say, the Russians.

This is a controversial point which may be argued limitlessly, especially as there is so little scientific evidence bearing upon it. What is indisputable from the facts is that even in externals China, India, Persia and Turkey have all had a history so peculiar, each to itself, that to attempt to combine them all in a single volume is merely to put in a single binding so many unrelated books. The result in the present attempt is that the reader who does not begin with a fairly comprehensive knowledge of the East is left only more confused. Strange as it may seem, there are some subjects that simply do not lend themselves to being "outlined," fashion of 1926.

The volume on China is more successful. Here Professor Gowen has a picture which can be composed on a single canvas. It is a theme he has dealt with before. He has already written authoritatively and well on the history of China. If there is any criticism, it is in the excess of contemporary-mindedness. Half the book is given to some forty centuries and the other half to the not over-important political embroilments of the last twenty years. Which would seem to any scholarly Chinese characteristically occidental and characteristically unsound. Perhaps it did, too, to the authors—Mr. Hall has collaborated with Professor Gowen in this volume. For there is a journalistic rush in the second half entirely lacking in the first.

NATHANIEL PEFFER.

Contributors

RAYMOND HOLDEN has published a volume of verse, Granite and Alabaster.

HAROLD J. LASKI, a professor at the University of London, is the author of Authority in the Modern State.

ELINOR WYLIE, whose latest book is The Orphan Angel, has just joined the editorial staff of the New Republic as contributing editor.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER has contributed articles, reviews and poems to various New York papers and periodicals.

NORMAN THOMAS, formerly editor of The World Tomorrow, is executive director of the League for Industrial Democracy.

NATHANIEL PEFFER was a journalist in China, and is now lecturing on Imperialism at the New School for Social Research.

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